



# Food Label Reading

Understanding how to read food labels can help you make more informed choices when grocery shopping and selecting packaged foods. Nutrition labels provide important information about the nutrients in food, allowing you to compare products, manage health conditions, and support overall well-being.

Packaged foods are required by Health Canada to include:



Nutrition facts table



Ingredient list



Select nutrition claims



Food allergen labels

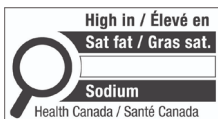


Date labels (best before, packaged on, expiration)

Some information that may not be found on all food packages include nutrition claims and front-of-packaging symbols.



**Nutrition claims** are optional and can describe the amount of a nutrient in a particular food item (excellent source of calcium, low in sodium), or positive effects for your health (“oat fibre helps lower cholesterol”).



**Front-of-packaging symbols** are now mandatory on prepackaged foods that are high in saturated fats, sodium, and/or sugars. This label can be found towards the upper right of the packaged food item and is designed to help you make quick and informed decisions while grocery shopping.

**Frequently eating foods that are high in saturated fats, sodium, and sugars have been linked to an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, obesity, and some types of cancers.**



## How to Read Nutrition Labels

The nutrition facts table shows us the:

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
<b>Valeur nutritive</b>	
Per 3/4 cup (175 g) pour 3/4 tasse (175 g)	
<b>Calories 130</b>	<b>% Daily Value*</b>
	<b>% valeur quotidienne*</b>
<b>Fat / Lipides 3.5 g</b>	<b>5 %</b>
Saturated / saturés 2 g	11 %
+ Trans / trans 0.2 g	
<b>Carbohydrate / Glucides 7 g</b>	
Fibre / Fibres 0 g	0 %
Sugars / Sucres 4 g	4 %
<b>Protein / Protéines 17 g</b>	
<b>Cholesterol / Cholestérol 20 mg</b>	
<b>Sodium 60 mg</b>	<b>3 %</b>
Potassium 300 mg	6 %
Calcium 200 mg	15 %
Iron / Fer 0 mg	0 %
*5% or less is <b>a little</b> , 15% or more is <b>a lot</b>	
* 5 % ou moins c'est <b>peu</b> , 15 % ou plus c'est <b>beaucoup</b>	

### 1. Serving Size

- The serving size describes the amount of food that the rest of the information on the nutrition facts table is based on. This is not necessarily the amount you “should” be eating— it is just a standard measurement.
- Compare the number to the amount that you plan to eat— if you eat double the serving size, then double the nutrients.

### 2. Calories and nutrients

- Limit certain nutrients such as added sugars, sodium, and saturated fat
- Look for products that have nutrients that are important for our bodies such as iron, potassium, vitamin D, calcium, and fibre.

### 3. % Daily Value (% DV)

- The % DV is used as a guide to tell us if a product has a lot or a little of a nutrient based on the daily recommended amount
  - 5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot

Underneath the nutrition facts table, you will find the Ingredients List. The ingredients are listed in order of their weight in the food product, meaning that the first few ingredients make up most of the product.

Use nutrition labels to compare similar products from different brands, and to help choose food that is:

- Lower in saturated fats, added sugars and sodium
- Lower or higher in nutrients that interest you