

Reading Food Labels

Week 4

This week we are going to find out how to read the nutrition labels on the back of food packets to help you to work out which foods are healthier to eat.

A lot of people think that the easiest way to eat healthy is to buy low fat products.

Unfortunately, food packaging and low-fat claims can be misleading as many low-fat products can also contain a large amount of added sugars to compensate for the fat being removed.

Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (150g) contains

Energy	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
1046kJ 250kcal	3.0g LOW	1.3g LOW	34g HIGH	0.9g MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake

Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ/ 167kcal

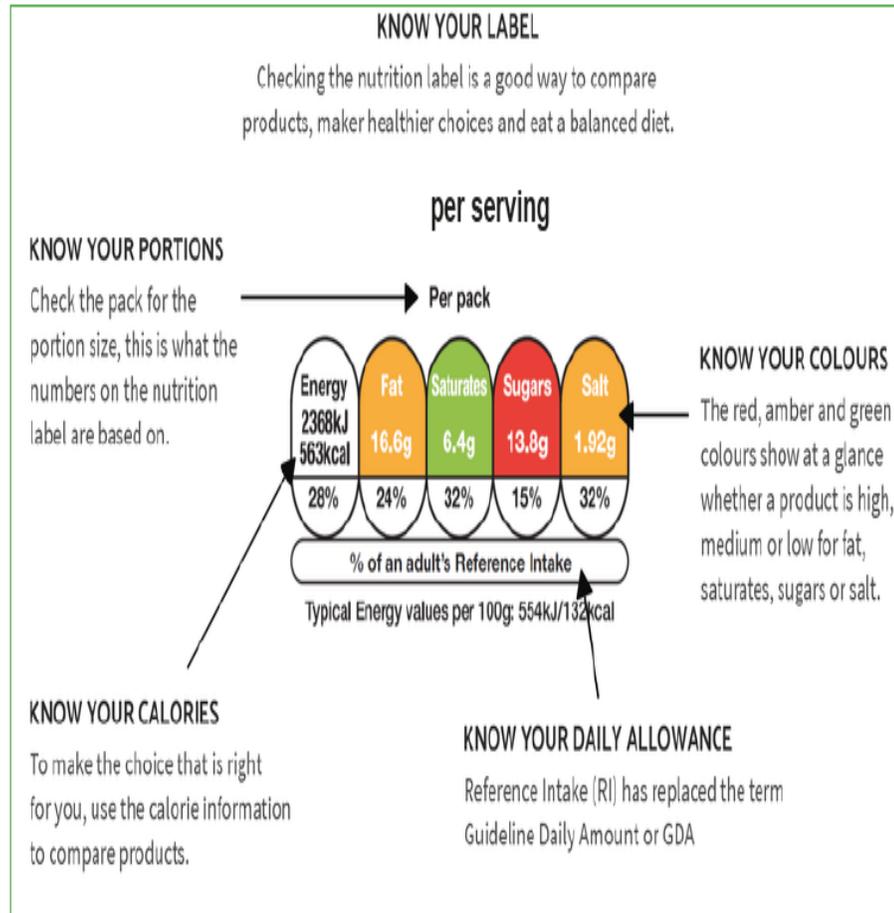
Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars

We don't have to read the food labels on all packaging because there are some foods that are a part of our staple diet and are essential foods these are usually unrefined unprocessed foods which include

- Fruit and vegetables (including fresh, frozen, tinned –in natural juices)
- Raw meat, fish, chicken
- Potatoes
- Pasta (brown wholewheat)
- Rice (brown, wild or basmati)
- Bread (wholegrain, granary)
- Beans and pulses
- Dairy products e.g. milk and reduced fat cheese
- Porridge oats
- Cooking ingredients like wholemeal flour or healthy oils



Front of pack nutrition labels



- For a healthier choice choose products with more greens and fewer reds.
- If a nutrient appears in red on the label, try to limit the number of times you eat this food.
- Amber means neither high nor low, so you can eat foods with all or mostly amber on the label most of the time as long as you keep under the daily allowance.

Back of pack labels

Nutrition information on the back or side of a food packet is a legal requirement. As shown below, the highlighted elements must be included on all packaging:

1. Nutrients per 100 grams
2. Nutrients per serving (sometimes called a portion)
3. Number of servings per pack

Nutrition				
Typical values	100g contains	Each slice (typically 44g) contains	% RI*	RI* for an average adult
Energy	985kJ 235kcal	435kJ 105kcal		8400kJ 2000kcal
Fat	1.5g	0.7g	1%	70g
of which saturates	0.3g	0.1g	1%	20g
Carbohydrate	45.5g	20.0g		
of which sugars	3.8g	1.7g	2%	90g
Fibre	2.8g	1.2g		
Protein	7.7g	3.4g		
Salt	1.0g	0.4g	7%	6g

This pack contains 16 servings

*Reference intake of an average adult (8400kJ / 2000kcal)

Fats & Sugars



- The limits that we advise to look for are - 6g per 100g for both fats and sugars
- Always look on the back of the pack in the per 100g column
- We need to make sure that the food or drink item meets both the fat and sugar limit.

Fats

The fat information is divided into two parts - the total fat content and then a breakdown of the different types of fats e.g. saturated fats, monounsaturated and sometimes polyunsaturated fats.



Sugars



For the sugar content you will need to look under the carbohydrate section which will tell you the sugar content, it will be labelled 'of which are sugars' this should be 6g or less per 100g. One exception to the rule is that the food product could be high in natural sugars such as fruit sugars

Foods to watch out for

- Juice drinks – 1 juice pouch has 2 cubes of sugar
- Cereal bars – up to 3 cubes of sugar
- Ice-cream – up to 5 cubes of sugar
- Yoghurt – up to 6 cubes of sugar
- Fun sized sweets – up to 5 cubes of sugar
- Chocolate bar – up to 6 cubes of sugar
- Fizzy drinks
- Breakfast cereals



Further Resources

This is a free 8-week email programme that encourages families to eat better and move more, with budget conscious, easy and practical ideas.

www.healthysteps.uk



Thank You