

Reading Nutrition Labels

Nutrition labels provide useful information that can help you make healthier and safer food choices.

Basic Information on Food Labels



1. Product Name

Describes the food and its contents.

2. Ingredient List

Contains all ingredients, listed in descending order by weight.

3. Nutrition Information

Includes nutrients found in one serving or in 100g or 100ml of food.

4. Origin of the Product

Contains the country of origin, name and address of the local manufacturer, packer, importer or distributor.



5. Usage Instructions

Contains storage and usage instructions.

6. Date Marking

Indicates the "Expiry date", "Use by", "Sell by" or "Best before" date.

7. Net Quantity

Indicates the actual net weight (solid food) or volume (liquid food) of the food, excluding the packaging.

Do you know?

The terms “expiry”, “use by”, “sell by” and “best before” have different meanings?

- Expiry and use by dates – item must be consumed by these dates
- Sell by and best before dates – item can be consumed after these dates, however the taste may not be the same

Choosing Food Products

1. Go Through the Ingredient List

The ingredients are listed from the most to the least by weight. Hence, be mindful of food with sugars, fats/ oils and salt listed as the first three ingredients. These ingredients may also present themselves as other common ingredient names such as:

Fats and Oils	Sugars	Salt and ingredients containing Sodium
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vegetable oil/ fat• Hydrogenated vegetable oil/ fat• Butter• Margarine• Coconut• Coconut oil• Palm oil/ Palm olein• Cream• Sour cream• Dripping• Lard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cane/ White/ Brown sugar• Raw sugar• Icing sugar• Molasses• Honey• Corn/ Malt/ Maple/ Pancake syrup• Fruit juice concentrates• Glucose• Sucrose• Fructose• Lactose• Maltose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salt• Rock salt• Sea salt• Himalayan salt• Chicken seasoning powder• Soy sauce• Oyster sauce• Monosodium glutamate• Baking soda/ powder• Sodium nitrate• Sodium guanylate• Sodium inosinate



If you have a food allergy or intolerance, check the ingredient list for possible food triggers. Common ingredients include peanuts, seafood, wheat, gluten, soy or eggs.

2. Understand the Nutrition Information Panel

The Nutrition Information Panel provides information on the nutrient content of the food product. It is useful in carbohydrate portioning, and in helping you to choose lower fat, sodium and sugar or higher fibre food.

ABC CEREAL DRINK		
NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION: Serving per box: 10 sachets ; Serving size: 50g (1 sachet)		
	Per serving (50g)	Per 100g
Energy	198kcal	396kcal
Protein	1.8g	3.6g
Fat	3.0g	6.0g
- Saturated Fat	1.5g	3.0g
Carbohydrate	23.5g	47.0g
- Total sugar	1.5g	3.0g
Dietary fibre	6.0g	12.0g
Sodium	58mg	116mg
Ingredients: Wholegrain wheat, rice, milled corn, wheat bran, sugar, soluble wheat fibre, brown rice syrup, malt flavour, natural preservatives		

There are 10 servings in the box, each weighing 50g.

Use "per serving" to find out the nutrient content of the food product

Choose products higher in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, and lower in saturated fats. Aim for $\leq 1.5g$ saturated fats per 100g or $\leq 0.75g$ saturated fats per 100ml

Products with $\leq 5g$ sugars per 100g or $\leq 2.5g$ sugars per 100ml or $\leq 2g$ sugars per serving are considered "low in sugar"

A product with $\geq 6g$ dietary fibre per 100g or $\geq 4g$ dietary fibre per serving is "high in dietary fibre"

A product with $\leq 120mg$ sodium per 100g is "low in sodium"

3. Compare Different Food Products using the Nutrition Information Panel

The serving size of different food products can vary depending on their brand or manufacturer.

- Use “per serving” if the food products have similar serving size

Milk A			Milk B		
NUTRITION INFORMATION			NUTRITION INFORMATION		
Servings per package: Approx. 4 Serving size: 250ml (1 Glass)			Servings per package: Approx. 4 Serving size: 250ml (1 Glass)		
	Per Serving	Per 100ml		Per Serving	Per 100ml
Energy	126 kcal (529 kJ)	50 kcal (210 kJ)	Energy	178 kcal (748 kJ)	71 kcal (298 kJ)
Protein	10.5 g	4.2 g	Protein	10.5 g	4.2 g
Total Fat	2.3 g	0.9 g	Total Fat	2.3 g	0.9 g
- Saturated Fat	1.5 g	0.6 g	- Saturated Fat	1.5 g	0.6 g
- Trans Fat	0.0 g	0.0 g	- Trans Fat	0.0 g	0.0 g
Cholesterol	13 mg	5 mg	Cholesterol	13 mg	5 mg
Carbohydrate	15.8 g	6.3 g	Carbohydrate	28.8 g	11.5 g
- Total Sugar	12.5 g	5.0 g	- Total Sugar	26.8 g	10.7 g
- Lactose	3.5 g	1.4 g	- Lactose	14.8 g	5.9 g
- Glucose	5.0 g	2.0 g	- Added Sugar	12.0 g	4.8 g
- Galactose	4.0 g	1.6 g	- Galactose	0.0 g	0.0 g
Dietary Fibre	0.0 g	0.0 g	Dietary Fibre	0.0 g	0.0 g
Sodium	138 mg	55 mg	Sodium	150 mg	60 mg
Calcium	500.0 mg	200.0 mg	Calcium	500.0 mg	200.0 mg
Vitamin A	250.0 mcg	100.0 mcg	Vitamin A	250.0 mcg	100.0 mcg
Thiamine (Vitamin B1)	1.3 mg	0.5 mg	Thiamine (Vitamin B1)	1.3 mg	0.5 mg
Niacin (Vitamin B3)	13.8 mg	5.5 mg	Niacin (Vitamin B3)	13.8 mg	5.5 mg
Pantothenic Acid (Vitamin B5)	8.8 mg	3.5 mg	Pantothenic Acid (Vitamin B5)	8.8 mg	3.5 mg
Pyridoxine (Vitamin B6)	1.3 mg	0.5 mg	Pyridoxine (Vitamin B6)	1.3 mg	0.5 mg
Vitamin C	25.0 mg	10.0 mg	Vitamin C	25.0 mg	10.0 mg
Vitamin D3	1.8 mcg	0.7 mcg	Vitamin D3	1.8 mcg	0.7 mcg
Vitamin E	7.5 mg	3.0 mg	Vitamin E	7.5 mg	3.0 mg
Vitamin K1	30.0 mcg	12.0 mcg	Vitamin K1	30.0 mcg	12.0 mcg

Milk A is a healthier choice as it contains lower sugar content

- Use “per 100g” or “per 100ml” if the food products have different serving size



BREAD A
Wholemeal Bread

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
Servings per package: 7		
Serving size: 2 slices (60g)		
	Per serving	Per 100g
Energy	145 kcal*	242 kcal*
Protein	7.4 g	12.4 g
Total fat	1.4 g	2.3 g
saturated fat	0.7 g	1.1 g
trans fat	0 g	0 g
Cholesterol	0 mg	0 mg
Carbohydrate	28 g	48 g
Dietary fibre	3.6 g	6 g
Sodium	206 mg	344 mg



BREAD B
White Bread

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
Servings per package: 10		
Serving size: 1 slice (50g)		
	Per serving	Per 100g
Energy	157 kcal*	314 kcal*
Protein	6.3 g	12.5 g
Total fat	3.7 g	7.3 g
saturated fat	1.0 g	2.0 g
trans fat	No data	No data
Cholesterol	0 mg	0 mg
Carbohydrate	26.3 g	52.6 g
Dietary fibre	1.9 g	3.7 g
Sodium	142 mg	285 mg

Bread A is a healthier choice as it contains lower fat and higher dietary fibre

4. Look for the Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS)



Higher in Wholegrains

Products carrying HCS with this tagline contain at least 20% more wholegrains than similar products in the same food category.



Food carrying HCS with this tagline may include brown (or unpolished) rice, brown rice vermicelli (bee hoon), wholegrain breakfast cereals, wholemeal breads, wholegrain pasta and wholegrain cereal beverages.



Trans Fat Free

Products carrying HCS with this tagline contain very little or no trans fat i.e. less than 0.5g per 100g of the product.



Food carrying HCS with this tagline may include margarines/ fat spreads, edible oils, biscuits, crackers, breads and rolls.



Lower in Saturated Fat

Products carrying HCS with this tagline contain at least 25% less saturated fat than similar products in the same food category.



Food carrying HCS with this tagline may include dairy products, edible oils and convenience meals.



Lower in Sodium

Products carrying HCS with this tagline contain at least 25% less sodium than similar products in the same food category.



Food carrying HCS with this tagline may include sauces, recipe mixes, canned and processed meats, processed seafood-based foods and ready to eat legumes, nuts and seeds.



No Added Sodium

Products carrying HCS with this tagline contain no additional sodium added to the product.



Food carrying HCS with this tagline may include fresh/ frozen seafood, frozen/ chilled vegetables, herbs and spices.



Higher in Calcium

Products carrying HCS with this tagline contain at least 25% more calcium than similar products in the same food category.



Food carrying HCS with this tagline may include calcium-fortified soy products, milk and milk products.



Lower in Sugar

Products carrying HCS with this tagline contain at least 25% less sugar than similar products in the same food category.



Food carrying HCS with this tagline may include sweetened drinks such as Asian drinks, carbonated drinks, cultured milk products, juice drinks and sweet snacks such as chocolate confectionery.



No Added Sugar

Products carrying HCS with this tagline contain no added sugar to the product. This means that the product did not have any extra sugars added during processing.



Foods carrying HCS with this tagline may include beverages such as fruit juice, coffee and tea, as well as fruit spreads and dried fruit.



Sugar Free

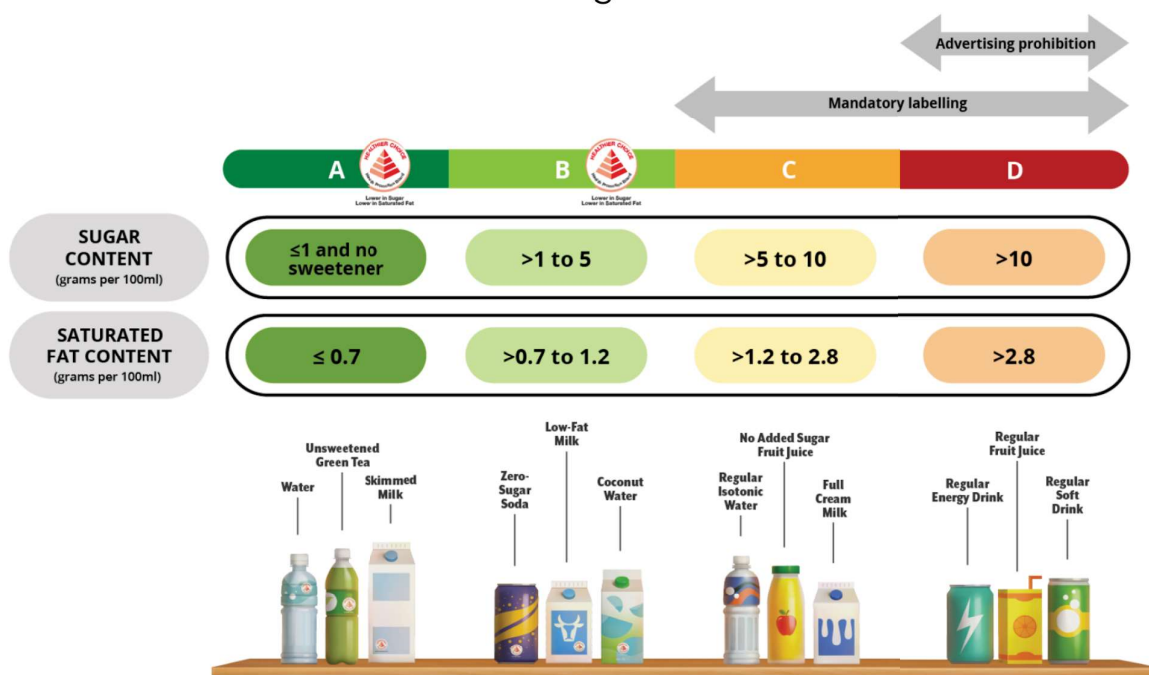
Products carrying HCS with this tagline contain contains 0.5g or less sugar per 100g or 100ml of the product.



Foods carrying HCS with this tagline may include beverages such as non-carbonated drinks, Asian drinks, isotonic drinks, carbonated drinks and water.

5. Choose drinks with Nutri-Grade A or B

The Nutri-Grade mark helps you identify healthier drinks, from Grade A being the lowest in sugar and saturated fat content, to Grade D being the highest. The figure below shows how much sugar and saturated fat are in each 100ml of different beverages.



Nutri-Grade Mark - Make Healthy Food & Grocery Choices reproduced from <https://healthhub.sg> with permission by Health Promotion Board, Singapore

- Note 1: Sugar content of the beverage is determined by its total sugar content. This amount is calculated by subtracting the amount of declared lactose and/or galactose on the Nutrition Information Panel
- Note 2: Drinks like fruit juice have no added sugar but has a Nutri-Grade C or D because of the naturally occurring sugar (fructose) in fruits
- Note 3: Certain drinks with no sugar may receive Nutri-Grade C or D because they contain more than 1.2g of saturated fat per 100ml

Do you know?

Nutri-Grade C or D drinks do not necessarily mean that they should be avoided. They may be required in moderation for certain dietary needs. For example, seniors who have trouble chewing fruit may benefit from drinking fruit juice.

Contributed by Nutrition & Dietetics Service, Allied Health Services

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