GameDay Gazette

a newsletter for healthy kids and their families

Volume 2 • Issue 5

Nutrition Bites

Navigating Nutrition Fact Labels

Reading nutrition labels is an important skill to develop when making healthy choices for your family. But the information on the labels can be confusing and sometimes even downright misleading. Just about every packaged food made in the United States has a food label indicating serving size and other nutritional information. The nutrition label pictured here is for a package of macaroni and cheese.

Serving Size

The first place to look on the Nutrition Facts label is the serving size and the number of servings in each package. This may or may not be the serving amount that you normally eat. In the sample label, one serving of macaroni and cheese equals one cup. If you ate the entire package, you would eat two cups. That doubles the calories, fat, etc. listed.

Calories and Calories from Fat

Calories provide a measure of how much energy your body gets from a serving of this food. Many Americans get more calories than they need without meeting recommended intakes for many nutrients. The "calories from fat" number shows you how many calories in a single serving come from fat. In this example, almost half the calories in a single serving come from fat. Eating too many calories in a day is linked to excess weight and obesity.

Fat

Most people need to cut back on calories and fat. Too much fat may contribute to heart disease and other conditions. If you are watching your weight, the American Heart Association recommends that your overall intake is less than 35 percent of your total calories from fat, with less than seven percent as saturated fat and less than one percent from trans fat. Saturated fat is linked with increased cholesterol and heightened risk of heart disease and stroke.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	**18%**
Saturated Fat 3g	**15%**
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	**10%**
Sodium 470mg	**20%**
Total Carbohydrate 31g	**10%**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0%**
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	**4%**
Vitamin C	**2%**
Calcium	**20%**
Iron	**4%**

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Cholesterol

The American Heart Association recommends that most people eat less than 300 mg per day to help prevent high cholesterol, heart disease, and stroke. Your doctor can provide specific numbers based on your current health.

Sodium

Healthy adults should take in less than 2,400 mg (1 teaspoon) of salt each day. Again, your doctor can make personalized recommendations for each member of your family.

Carbohydrates and Protein

Both carbohydrates and protein are essential for healthy nutrition. However, it's important to emphasize lean (low-fat, low-cholesterol) protein, as well as fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain (high fiber) breads and cereals.

Fiber and Nutrients

Most American's don't get enough dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron in their diets. Eating enough of these nutrients can improve health and lower the risk of certain diseases. Use the nutrition label to help limit those nutrients you want to cut back on and to increase the nutrients you need in greater amounts.

Daily Values

This part of the label is the same on every package of food because it shows the recommended dietary advice for all Americans. These numbers are based on a 2,000- or 2,500-calorie diet. This may or may not be appropriate for your personal plan. Choose foods with a low percentage of daily value of fat, cholesterol, and sodium. Try to reach 100 percent of carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Talk to your doctor nurse or other health-care professional to learn more about your needs.

GameDay by Grade

Your Monthly Guide to GameDay Activities

Kindergarten

Did you Know? The game of Follow the Leader is very popular among Indian tribes. In fact, the Omaha tribe has a song that children sing while they play: *Follow my leader where'er he goes; what he'll do next, nobody knows.*

Activity: Play a simple game of "Follow the Leader" to practice identifying body parts and movements. Begin with an adult leading the child(ren) through a series of movements such as walking, skipping, galloping, etc. Include arm lifts and circles, shoulder raises and rolls, and other body movements, too.

First Grade

Did you Know? The heart and the lungs work as a team during physical activity. When you breathe in, oxygen fills up the lungs and passes into small blood vessels. These vessels take the oxygen to the heart. The heart sends the oxygen-filled blood out to the body, feeding the cells, organs, and muscles.

Activity: Talk about activities that help build a stronger heart and lungs. Does watching television strengthen the heart? What about climbing up stairs? Which activity is better for your heart and lungs: playing video games or playing tag?

Second Grade

Did you Know? Your pulse is the rate at which your heart beats. Your pulse is usually called your heart rate, which is the number of times your heart beats each minute (beats per minute or bpm). As your heart pumps blood through your body, you can feel a pulsing in some of the blood vessels close to the skin's surface, such as your wrist, neck, or upper arm. Counting your pulse rate is a simple way to find out how fast your heart is beating.

Homework: Find your pulse by lightly pressing on the inside of your wrist, just below the thumb. You'll know that you've found your pulse when you can feel a small beat under your skin. Find your heart rate by using a watch with a second hand and counting how many beats you feel in 1 minute. Try running in place or jumping rope for a few minutes and taking your pulse again. Now how many beats in 1 minute?

Third Grade

Did you Know? When you exercise, just about every part of your body pitches in to help your muscles work. You breathe faster to help send oxygen to your heart. Your heart beats faster to send more blood to your muscles. Your body temperature rises to warm up your muscles. You may sweat, which helps keep your body temperature steady.

Homework: Jog in place for one minute. What happens to your body. What changes do you feel in your heart and lungs? Are you breathing harder? Is your heart pumping faster? Are you warmer? Anything else?

Fourth Grade

Did you Know? There's a simple way to measure how hard you are exercising, just by counting to 10. The Rate of Perceived Exertion Scale is different for every person, but always ranges from one (sleeping) to 10 (the hardest activity you can do).

Activity: On a piece of paper, write down the numbers one through 10. Start with number one as sleeping, and continue through number 10, listing activities as you go. The activities should get more difficult as you move toward number 10. Number 10 should be the hardest activity you could possibly do; something you don't think you could do for more than a minute or two. Compare your list with other people in your home.

Fifth Grade

Did you Know? Giving your body the right kind of fuel (nutrition) can make you stronger, healthier, and more energetic. It can even help you do better in school! Healthy food, including water, gives your body important vitamins, minerals, protein, and energy to your muscles and organs.

Activity: Make a meal plan for one day. Include healthy food choices for three meals and two snacks. Be sure to include protein and plenty of fruits and vegetables. Use whole-grain breads and cereals instead of "white" breads, cereals, and pastas. Be sure to list your glasses of water, too.

Sixth Grade

Did you Know? Your pulse is the rate at which your heart beats. Your pulse is usually called your heart rate, which is the number of times your heart beats each minute (beats per minute or bpm). As your heart pumps blood through your body, you can feel a pulsing in some of the blood vessels close to the skin's surface, such as your wrist, neck, or upper arm. Counting your pulse rate is a simple way to find out how fast your heart is beating.

Homework: Find your pulse by lightly pressing on the inside of your wrist, just below the thumb. You'll know that you've found your pulse when you can feel a small beat under your skin. Find your heart rate by using a watch with a second hand and counting how many beats you feel in 1 minute. Try running in place or jumping rope for a few minutes and taking your pulse again. Now how many beats in 1 minute?