



Changes to the Nutrition Facts Label: What Parents Need to Know

Recent changes to food labels can help families make healthier choices (</English/ages-stages/gradeschool/nutrition/Pages/Making-Healthy-Food-Choices.aspx>) at the grocery store. The Nutrition Facts label on packaged foods and beverages is now easier to read and understand. It also includes more information on nutrients most U.S. children and adults get too much or too little of in their diets. The changes are based on new findings about diet-related health problems that affect growing numbers of children and adults.



Do all foods have the new label now?

Most, but not all, products do. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) required most packaged foods and beverages made by large companies to start using the new label (<https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-education-resources-materials/new-nutrition-facts-label>) as of January 2020.

What is different on the new label?

Here are 8 key changes on the new Nutrition Facts label that help families know if products they buy measure up with dietary needs.

Calories & Serving Size. The new Nutrition Facts has larger, bolder letters for "Calories (</English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Energy-In-Recommended-Food-Drink-Amounts-for-Children.aspx>)," as well as "servings per container," and "Serving size." Serving sizes on the new label now more closely reflect how much people today actually eat and drink (though not necessarily how much they should eat). For example, the reference amount used to set a serving of ice cream was previously $\frac{1}{2}$ cup but is changing to $\frac{3}{8}$ cup.

Two-Column Labels. The new FDA rules also require two-column labels on packages that contain between one and two servings, because people typically will consume these in one sitting. On these products, one column now lists calorie and nutrition information for the average serving size, and one for the entire package. A 12-ounce or 20-ounce bottle of soda (</English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/How-to-Reduce-Added-Sugar-in-Your-Childs-Diet.aspx>) will be labeled as 1 serving, for example, since people are likely to drink either size at one time.

Added sugars. For the first time, the Nutrition Facts label includes the amount of added sugars (</English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/How-to-Reduce-Added-Sugar-in-Your-Childs-Diet.aspx>) each serving of the product has. Eating and drinking too many foods and beverages with added sugars is tied to chronic diseases such as obesity (</English/health-issues/conditions/obesity/Pages/Your-Overweight-Child-and-the-Risk-of-Disease.aspx>), diabetes (</English/news/Pages/AAP-Publishes-First-Guidelines-to-Manage-Type-2-Diabetes-in-Children.aspx>) and heart

NEW LABEL / WHAT'S DIFFERENT

Servings:
larger,
bolder type

New:
added sugars

Change
in nutrients
required

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories 230	
<small>% Daily Value*</small>	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%
<small>* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small>	

Serving sizes
updated

Calories:
larger type

Updated
daily
values

Actual
amounts
declared

New
footnote

Source: U.S. Food & Drug Administration

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disease (/English/health-issues/conditions/heart/Pages/Heart-Disease.aspx). With rates of these diseases in children and adults on the rise, the Academy of Pediatrics, the American Heart Association and other major health groups call for (<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/143/4/e20190282>) limiting added sugars in the diet.

The two main sources of added sugars in the U.S. diet are sugar-sweetened beverages (including soda, sport and energy drinks (/English/healthy-living/sports/Pages/Sports-Supplements.aspx) and fruit drinks (/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Fruit-Juice-and-Your-Childs-Diet.aspx)) and snacks and sweets (/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/How-to-Tame-Your-Childs-Sweet-Tooth.aspx).

Fiber. The recommended Daily Value of dietary fiber (/English/ages-stages/teen/nutrition/Pages/Fiber-An-Important-Part-of-Your-Teens-Diet.aspx), which many Americans fall short of, increased from 25 to 28 percent of total calories. The change reflects growing research that shows how important fiber is to healthy digestion, heart health, and body weight.

Fats. The Nutrition Facts label no longer list the percentage of "calories from fat" and instead will show percentages from just the unhealthy saturated and trans fats (/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Avoiding-Trans-Fats.aspx). When it comes to health outcomes, the type of fat you eat matters more than the overall amount of fat.

Vitamin D. The daily values per serving for Vitamin D (/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Vitamin-D-On-the-Double.aspx) is now included, since Americans don't always get enough of this nutrient. Vitamin D helps keep bones, muscles, nerves and the immune system strong and healthy.

FOOD SERVING SIZES GET A REALITY CHECK

Serving Size Changes

What's considered a single serving has changed in the decades since the original nutrition label was created. So now serving sizes will be more realistic to reflect how much people typically eat at one time.

Current Serving Size	New Serving Size
4 SERVINGS 1 PINT 200 CALORIES	3 SERVINGS 1 PINT 270 CALORIES

Packaging Affects Servings

Package size affects how much people eat and drink. So now, for example, both 12 and 20 ounce bottles will equal 1 serving, since people typically drink both sizes in one sitting.

12 OUNCES 120 CALORIES	20 OUNCES 200 CALORIES
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1 SERVING PER BOTTLE FOR EITHER BOTTLE SIZE

Source:
U.S. Food & Drug Administration

Although current 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (<https://health.gov/our-work/food-nutrition/2015-2020-dietary-guidelines>) recommend that added sugars contribute less than 10% of total calories consumed, studies suggest U.S. children and teens consume 17% of their calories from added sugars.

Sodium & potassium. Most Americans consume too much sodium (/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/We-Dont-Need-to-Add-Salt-to-Food.aspx) and not enough potassium (<https://www.cdc.gov/salt/potassium.htm>), both of which can contribute to high blood pressure. The new food label slightly lowered the daily limit for sodium from 2,400 mg per day to 2,300 mg per day, and now also requires potassium content to be listed.

Vitamin A & C. The amount of vitamins A and C will no longer need to be listed on the label, but may still be included on a voluntary basis. Deficiencies of these nutrients no longer common, like they were when the Nutrition Facts label was first created.

The New Nutrition Facts label, the latest design from FDA



Remember

If you have questions about choosing healthy, nutritious foods for your child, talk with your pediatrician.

More Information

(<https://vimeo.com/394544151/844f69aa6b>) (<https://vimeo.com/394544151/844f69aa6b>)

- What is the Nutrition Facts Label and How Do I Use It? (<https://vimeo.com/394544151/844f69aa6b>) (FDA/AMA/AAP educational video)
- Energy In: Recommended Food & Drink Amounts for Children (/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Energy-In-Recommended-Food-Drink-Amounts-for-Children.aspx)
- Serving Sizes for Toddlers (/English/ages-stages/toddler/nutrition/Pages/Serving-Sizes-for-Toddlers.aspx)
- Obesity Prevention: AAP Policy Explained (/English/health-issues/conditions/obesity/Pages/Obesity-Prevention-AAP-Policy-Explained.aspx)
- My Plate (/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/MyPlate.aspx)

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Source American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Nutrition (Copyright © 2020)

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