

The updated food label: What you need to know



Reading food labels allows you to compare foods and select the healthiest options. In May of 2016, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced updates to the current food label to help you make informed decisions about the foods you are selecting. The new food labels will reflect the most current scientific information to aid you in understanding the link between your food choices and the impact on your health.

NEW LABEL / WHAT'S DIFFERENT

Servings: larger, bolder type

Serving sizes updated

Calories: larger type

Updated daily values

Actual amounts declared

New: added sugars

Change in nutrients required

New footnote

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	16%
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%

*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.

FDA

Highlights of the new food label

1. Serving sizes updated and larger bolder font. The amount of added sugar is now listed in addition to the total sugar
2. Actual amount of vitamin D, potassium, calcium and iron now required to be listed
3. Listing the actual amounts of vitamins A and C are voluntary
4. Actual amounts of total fat, saturated fat and trans fat are now required to be listed
5. Calories from fat has been removed
6. Dual column labeling will be provided to give the nutrition information per serving and per package
7. Daily Values have been updated based on the most recent scientific evidence

****Food manufactures have until July 26, 2018 to comply with the new food label requirements and smaller food companies have until July 26, 2019.**

Sources:

USDA. Changes to the Nutrition Facts Label. Retrieved September 29, 2016 from:

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/LabelingNutrition/ucm385663.htm>



FAQ's of the new food label

1. Why are they changing the Nutrition Facts Label?

- It has been over 20 years since the current food label has been revised.

2. Why must “added sugars” now be included?

- High intake of added sugars decreases our intake of healthy nutrient dense foods and increases our overall caloric intake.
- Lower intakes of sugar-sweetened foods and beverages are associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease as well as obesity and diabetes.
- The added sugar listed separately under “total sugars” helps you to understand just how much sugar has been added to the product.

3. How does the FDA define “added sugars”?

- “Added sugars include sugars that are added during the processing of foods or are packed as such,” and includes the following names for sugar: syrup, brown sugar, high fructose corn syrup, invert sugar, maltose, trehalose, honey, molasses, sucrose, lactose, maltose sugar and concentrated fruit juice.

4. Are you using the new food label to tell people what to eat?

- The new label is designed to provide information to help you make informed choices about the foods you buy and eat. The final choice of what to select and eat is up to you and your family.

5. Why is trans-fat still on the label if the FDA is phasing it out?

- Trans-fat is to be reduced but won't be completely eliminated from foods, so the FDA is still requiring it on the new food label. The FDA doesn't generally recognize artificially produced trans-fat as safe, but it does occur naturally in food from animals (mainly cows and goats). Also, small amounts of artificially produced trans-fat can be added to a product if special permission is granted by the FDA.

6. Why are Vitamin D and potassium being added to the Nutrition Facts Label?

- It has been determined from nationwide food surveys, that most Americans don't get enough vitamin D and potassium. This puts us at a high risk for certain chronic diseases. Vitamin D is important for bone health, and potassium can help to lower blood pressure. Calcium and iron are already on the food label, and will remain on the new one.

7. Why are you no longer requiring Vitamin A and C?

- Vitamin A and C deficiencies are now rare compared to the early 1900's. The food manufacture can still voluntarily list these vitamins.

8. I heard that serving sizes will actually be bigger. That doesn't seem to make sense with the obesity epidemic.

- Serving sizes will be more realistic and reflect how much a person typically eats at one time.

9. Will the new requirements apply to imported food?

- Yes, foods that are imported into the US will need to meet the new requirements.