

MAKING SENSE OF FOOD AND DRINK LABELLING



WHAT'S IN A LABEL?

ENERGY 460kJ 110kcal 6%	FAT 0.7g LOW 1%	SATURATES 0.1g LOW 1%	SUGARS 5.1g HIGH 6%	SALT 0.2g MED 3%
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FOOD LABELS OFTEN CONTAIN LOTS OF NUTRITION INFORMATION. THIS GUIDE HELPS YOU TO MAKE SENSE OF FOOD LABELS SO YOU CAN MAKE HEALTHIER CHOICES.

By eating well and being a healthy weight, you can reduce your risk of cancer and other diseases.

TYPES OF NUTRITION INFORMATION ON PACKAGING:

- **Nutrition tables** – found on most pre-packaged food and drink, usually on the side or back of the packaging.
- **Ingredients** – listed in order of amount (by weight), from highest to lowest.
- **Front-of-pack labels** – simplified nutrition information found on the front of packaging. These are voluntary, but the Government is trying to get food manufacturers to use the same design as much as possible.

HOW TO USE FRONT-OF-PACK LABELS

Looking at front-of-pack labels is the easiest way to see whether a food is a healthier choice. You can use them to compare products at a glance. The labels usually include traffic light colours which show you if the product is **high** (red), **medium** (amber) or **low** (green) in fat, saturates sugar and salt.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS EXPLAINED:



RED – EAT OCCASIONALLY

The more reds on a front-of-pack label, the less healthy the food or drink is likely to be. Try to have these less often or only in small amounts.



AMBER – EAT SOMETIMES

Amber means a food or drink is neither especially high nor low in a nutrient (fat, saturates, sugar or salt) so you can have foods and drinks with all, or mostly, ambers quite often.



GREEN – EAT REGULARLY

If a food or drink has all or mostly greens, it's likely to be a healthier choice and you can have it more often or in larger amounts.

When choosing between similar products, try choose the ones with more green and amber labels, and fewer reds ones.

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF A FRONT-OF-PACK LABEL AND HOW TO READ IT:

AT A GLANCE:

MAKING SENSE OF FOOD AND DRINK LABELLING

Front-of-pack nutrition label (example)

Each serving (30g) of cereal contains

1 ENERGY 460kJ 110kcal 6%	2 FAT 0.7g LOW 1%	SATURATES 0.1g LOW 1%	SUGARS 5.1g HIGH 6%	SALT 0.2g MED 3%
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4 % of adult's reference intake.
Typical values per 100g: Energy 1530kJ/360kcal

Always remember to check the serving size these values are for. They may not be for the amount you usually eat or drink.

NO COLOUR CODING?

If the label doesn't include traffic light labelling, you can check the amount of each nutrient in 100g (100ml for drinks), then use the back of the removable card to translate the information into red, amber or green.

1 ENERGY

Energy is measured in kilojoules (kj) and kilocalories (kcal – often called calories). Traffic light labels show the amount in 100g (100ml for drinks) and often the amount in a portion too.

On average, women need about 2,000 calories a day and men need about 2,500 calories a day. Children and older adults tend to need less, but teenagers and very active people may need more.

2 NUTRIENTS – FAT, SATURATES, SUGARS AND SALT

Nutrition labels show the amount of each nutrient in a portion, in grams. The amounts will also be colour-coded with traffic light labels, so that you can easily see if that amount is **high** (red), **medium** (amber) or **low** (green).

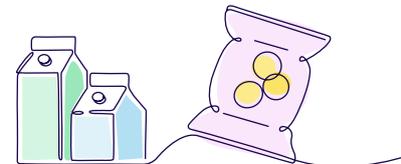
3 WHAT'S A 'SERVING'?

Food labels usually have a recommended 'serving' or portion size. It's important to check the portion size – even similar types have different portions sized. This example shows the information for a 30g serving of breakfast cereal, even though many of us would eat more than this.

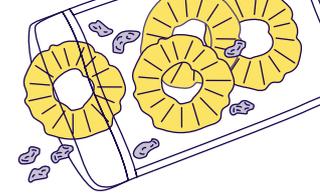
4 REFERENCE INTAKE

The 'reference intake' tells you how much energy, fat, saturates, sugar and salt a food or drink has compared to what is recommended for a typical adult following a healthy, balanced diet.

This is a only a guideline as some people may need more or less based on their body size and how active they are.



UNDERSTANDING FOOD LABEL CLAIMS

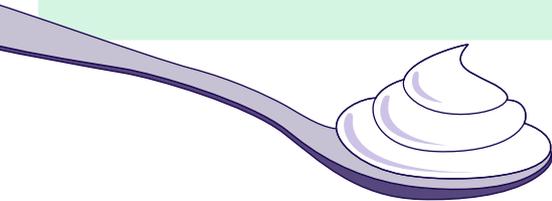


WHAT DOES 'REDUCED-FAT' OR 'LOW-FAT' MEAN?

Reduced fat means that the product has at least 30% less fat than the original version of the product. It's important to remember even if it says reduced fat, it could still be high in fat if it has more than 17.5g of fat per 100g of food or per 100ml of drink.

Low fat means that the product contains no more than 3g of fat per 100g of food or per 100ml of drink.

Reduced-fat or low-fat products can also still be high in calories. Sometimes the fat is replaced with sugar, so read the label to compare the calories, sugar and fat in the original and the lower-fat product.



WHAT DOES 'NO ADDED SUGAR' MEAN?

'No added sugar' means that manufacturers haven't added any sugar to the food or drink. But this doesn't mean that there is no sugar. For example, fruit contains natural sugars, meaning that dried fruit and fruit juices may have amber or even red labels for sugar.

You can check if sugar has been added by reading the ingredients list. As well as 'sugar', look out for syrup, honey and words ending in '-ose' (for example, sucrose, glucose and fructose) as these can be other words for sugar. Ingredients are listed in weight order, so if any of these appear near the top of the list, the product is likely to be very sugary.

Pre-packaged foods or drinks with added or natural sugars can have lots of calories, which means having them often and in large amounts can lead to weight gain and cause damage to your teeth, so try to limit how much you have.

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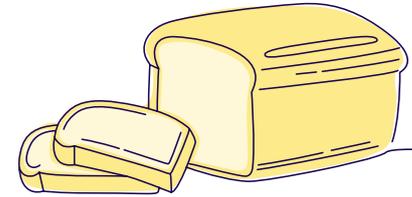
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LABEL READER: FOR FOOD



Download the sheet to cut out both boxes separately and stick together, back-to-back, to create a handy reference card you can keep in your wallet. If the label doesn't include traffic light colours, use the table to see how healthy a food is.

AT A GLANCE: MAKING SENSE OF FOOD AND DRINK LABELLING

Front-of-pack nutrition label (example)

Each serving (30g) of cereal contains

ENERGY 460kJ 110kcal 6%	FAT 0.7g LOW 1%	SATURATES 0.1g LOW 1%	SUGARS 5.1g HIGH 6%	SALT 0.2g MED 3%
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% of adult's reference intake.

Typical values per 100g: Energy 1530kJ/360kcal

Always remember to check the serving size these values are for. They may not be for the amount you usually eat or drink.



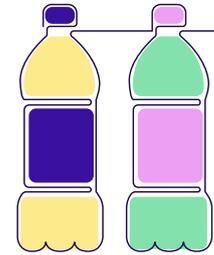
FOOD LABELLING: COLOUR-CODING EXPLAINED

Amount of each nutrient in 100g of food

	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
(TOTAL) SUGARS	over 22.5g (over 27g/portion*)	between 5g and 22.5g	5g and below
FAT	over 17.5g (over 21g/portion*)	between 3g and 17.5g	3g and below
SATURATES	over 5g (over 6g/portion*)	between 1.5g and 5g	1.5g and below
SALT	over 1.5g (over 1.8g/portion*)	between 0.3g and 1.5g	0.3g and below

*Used when suggested portion size is greater than 100g

LABEL READER: FOR DRINKS



Download the sheet to cut out both boxes separately and stick together, back-to-back, to create a handy reference card you can keep in your wallet. If the label doesn't include traffic light colours, use the table to see how healthy a drink is.

AT A GLANCE: MAKING SENSE OF FOOD AND DRINK LABELLING

Front-of-pack nutrition label (example)

Each 250ml serving contains

ENERGY 450kJ 105kcal 5%	FAT 0.7g LOW 1%	SATURATES 0.0g LOW 0%	SUGARS 26.5g HIGH 29%	SALT 0.0g LOW 0%
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% of adult's reference intake.

Typical values per 100ml: Energy 180kJ/42kcal

Always remember to check the serving size these values are for. They may not be for the amount you usually drink.



DRINK LABELLING: COLOUR-CODING EXPLAINED

Amount of each nutrient in 100g of ml of drink

	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
(TOTAL) SUGARS	over 11.25g (over 13.5g/portion*)	between 2.5g and 11.25g	2.5g and below
FAT	over 8.75g (over 10.5g/portion*)	between 1.5g and 8.75g	1.5g and below
SATURATES	over 2.5g (over 3g/portion*)	between 0.75g and 2.5g	0.75g and below
SALT	over 0.75g (over 0.9g/portion*)	between 0.3g and 0.755g	0.3g and below

*Used when suggested portion size is greater than 150ml

Remember, the measurement of grams (g) and millilitres (ml) are the same.