



Health  
Canada

Santé  
Canada

Your health and  
safety... our priority.

Votre santé et votre  
sécurité... notre priorité.

# Understanding Nutrition Labelling to Make Informed Food Choices



# Nutrition information provided on food labels

- Nutrition Facts

Nutrition Facts		Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 bowl (300 g) / Pour 1 bol (300 g)			
Amount		% Daily Value	
Teneur		% valeur quotidienne	
Calories / Calories	440		
Fat / Lipides	19 g	29 %	
Saturated / Saturés	4 g	8 %	

- Ingredient List

**INGREDIENTS:** Whole wheat, wheat bran, sugar/glucose-fructose, salt, malt (corn flour, malted barley), vitamins (thiamine hydrochloride, pyridoxine hydrochloride, folic acid, d-calcium pantothenate), minerals (iron, zinc oxide).

- Nutrition Claims

"Good source of fibre"

- Health Claims

"A healthy diet..."



Since 2005

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>			
Per 125 mL (87 g)			
Amount	% Daily Value		
<b>Calories</b> 80			
<b>Fat</b> 0.5 g	1 %		
Saturated 0 g	0 %		
+ Trans 0 g			
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0 mg			
<b>Sodium</b> 0 mg	0 %		
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 18 g	6 %		
Fibre 2 g	8 %		
Sugars 2 g			
<b>Protein</b> 3 g			
Vitamin A	2 %	Vitamin C	10 %
Calcium	0 %	Iron	2 %

## Nutrition Facts:

- Easy to find
- Easy to read
- On most prepackaged foods



# What food products have Nutrition Facts?

*Almost all* prepackaged foods have Nutrition Facts.

Some exceptions are:

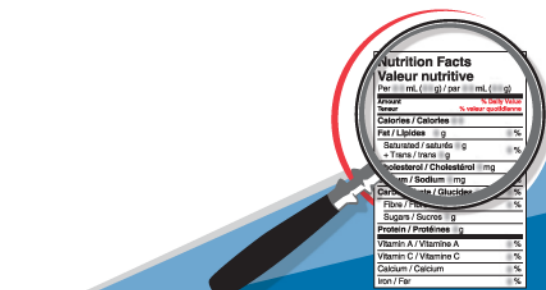
- fresh fruit and vegetables;
- raw meat, poultry, fish and seafood;
- foods prepared or processed at the store:

*bakery items, sausage, salads;*

- foods that contain very few nutrients:

*coffee beans, tea leaves, spices;*

- alcoholic beverages.





# Use Nutrition Facts...

- to easily compare similar foods
- to look for foods with a little or a lot of a specific nutrient
- to select foods for special diets

...to make informed food choices



# Nutrition Facts are based on a specific amount of food

Nutrition Facts	
Per 3/4 cup (100 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories 80</b>	
<b>Fat 1 g</b>	<b>1 %</b>
Saturated 0 g + Trans 0 g	<b>0 %</b>
<b>Cholesterol 0 mg</b>	
<b>Sodium 2 mg</b>	<b>0 %</b>
<b>Carbohydrate 15 g</b>	<b>5 %</b>
Fibre 3 g	<b>12 %</b>
Sugars 7 g	
<b>Protein 3 g</b>	
Vitamin A 2 %	Vitamin C 2 %
Calcium 2 %	Iron 4 %

Compare this to the amount you eat.

The **specific amount** is:

- listed under the Nutrition Facts title.
- listed in common measures you use at home **and** a metric unit.
- not necessarily a suggested quantity of food to consume.





## Examples of Specific Amount of Food

Food type	Suggested Serving Size
Bread	50 g (1 slice), if unsliced  OR  25 - 70 g (1-2 slices), if sliced
Crackers and melba toast	15 - 30 g (4 crackers)



# Specific amount of food

Compare it to the amount you eat.

## Nutrition Facts

Bran cereal with raisins

1 cup (59 g)



## Amount you eat

Bran cereal with raisins

1 ½ cups



Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 100 mL (3.5 fl. oz.)	Per 100 g (3.5 oz.)
Amount	% Daily Value
Total	
Calories / Calories	% Daily Value
Fat / Lipides	g %
Saturated / saturés	g %
Trans / trans	g %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol	mg %
Sodium / Sodium	mg %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol	mg %
Fiber / Fibre	g %
Sugars / Sucres	g %
Protein / Protéines	g %
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	%
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	%
Calcium / Calcium	%
Iron / Fer	%



# The % Daily Value (% DV) is:

Nutrition Facts	
Per 3/4 cup (175 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories</b> 160	
<b>Fat</b> 2.5 g	<b>4 %</b>
Saturated 1.5 g	
+ Trans 0 g	<b>8 %</b>
<b>Cholesterol</b> 10 mg	
<b>Sodium</b> 75 mg	<b>3 %</b>
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 25 g	<b>8 %</b>
Fibre 0 g	<b>0 %</b>
Sugars 24 g	
<b>Protein</b> 8 g	
Vitamin A 2 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 20 %	Iron 0 %

Yogurt

- used to determine whether there is a little or a lot of a nutrient in the amount of food.
- a benchmark to evaluate the nutrient content of foods.
- based on recommendations for a healthy diet.



# How to use the % Daily Value

Follow these three steps:

Step 1: LOOK at the amount of food

Nutrition Facts are based on a specific amount of food.

Compare this to the amount you eat.



Nutrition Facts			
Per 3/4 cup (175 g)			
Amount	% Daily Value		
<b>Calories</b> 160			
<b>Fat</b> 2.5 g	4 %		
Saturated 1.5 g	8 %		
+ Trans 0 g			
<b>Cholesterol</b> 10 mg			
<b>Sodium</b> 75 mg	3 %		
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 25 g	8 %		
Fibre 0 g	0 %		
Sugars 24 g			
<b>Protein</b> 8 g			
Vitamin A 2 %	Vitamin C 0 %		
Calcium 20 %	Iron 0 %		



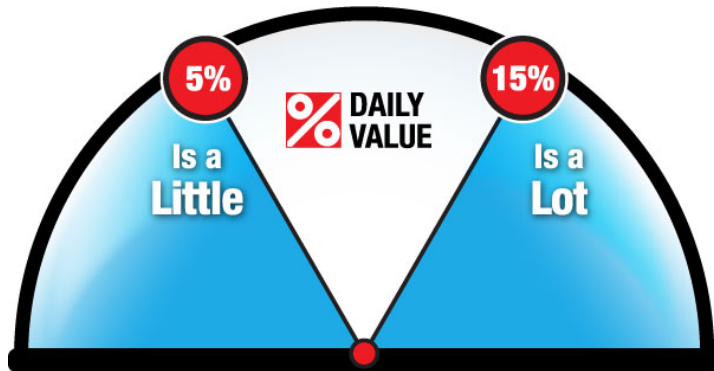
# How to use the % Daily Value

## Step 2: READ the % DV

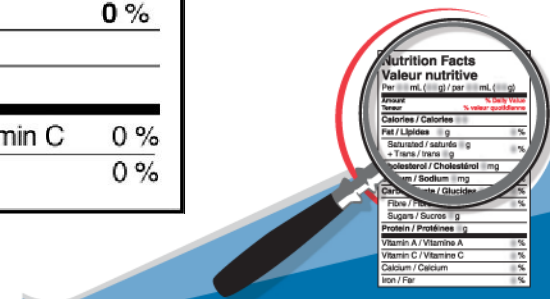
The % DV helps you see if a specific amount of food has a little or a lot of a nutrient.

5% DV or less is a **LITTLE**

15% DV or more is a **LOT**



Nutrition Facts	
Per 3/4 cup (175 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories</b> 160	
<b>Fat</b> 2.5 g	4 %
Saturated 1.5 g	8 %
+ Trans 0 g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 10 mg	
<b>Sodium</b> 75 mg	3 %
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 25 g	8 %
Fibre 0 g	0 %
Sugars 24 g	
<b>Protein</b> 8 g	
Vitamin A 2 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 20%	Iron 0 %



# How to use the % Daily Value

## Step 3: CHOOSE

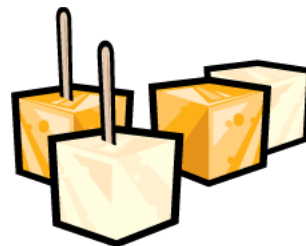
Make a better choice for you. Here are some nutrients you may want...

### more of...

- . Fibre
- . Vitamin A
- . Calcium
- . Iron

### less of...

- . Fat
- . Saturated and trans fats
- . Sodium



For example, if you would like to eat more fibre...

Cereal A

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1/2 cup (28 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories</b> 120	
<b>Fat</b> 1 g	2 %
Saturated 0.2 g	1 %
+ Trans 0 g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0 mg	
<b>Sodium</b> 170 mg	7 %
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 23 g	8 %
Fibre 7 g	28 %
Sugars 5 g	
<b>Protein</b> 3 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 2 %	Iron 30 %

Cereal B

Nutrition Facts	
Per 3/4 cup (30 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories</b> 120	
<b>Fat</b> 0 g	0 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
+ Trans 0 g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0 mg	
<b>Sodium</b> 150 mg	6 %
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 27 g	9 %
Fibre 1 g	4 %
Sugars 10 g	
<b>Protein</b> 2 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 2 %	Iron 30 %

... cereal A would be a better choice for you as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Remember: 5% DV or less is a **little** and 15% DV or more is a **lot**.





# The Ingredient List

- Lists all of the ingredients for a food by weight, from the most to the least.

## Example:

**INGREDIENTS:** WHOLE GRAIN ROLLED OATS, SUGAR, HIGH MONOUNSATURATED CANOLA OIL, ALMOND PIECES, RAISINS, GOLDEN SYRUP, SALT, CRISP RICE (RICE FLOUR, SOY PROTEIN, SUGAR, MALT, SALT), SOY LECITHIN, NATURAL FLAVOUR

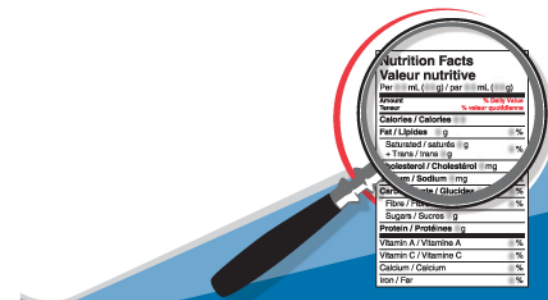
- Is a source of information for certain nutrients.
- Is a source of information for people with food allergies.



# Nutrition Claims



- Are regulated statements made when a food meets certain criteria.
- They are optional, and may be found only on some food products.



# Nutrition Claims

When you want to **decrease** the amount of certain nutrients, look for:

Free	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• none or hardly any of this nutrient</li><li>• an example is “sodium free”</li></ul>
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a small amount</li><li>• an example is “low fat”</li></ul>
Reduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• at least 25% less of the nutrient compared with a similar product</li><li>• an example is “reduced in Calories”</li></ul>
Light	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• can be used on foods that are reduced in fat or reduced in Calories</li></ul>



**Nutrition Facts**  
Valeur nutritive

Per 100 mL (100g) / per 100 mL (100g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories / Calories	% Daily Value
Fat / Lipides	g %
Saturated / saturés	g %
Trans / trans	g %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol	mg %
Sodium	mg %
Carbohydrate / Glucides	g %
Fiber / Fibre	g %
Sugars / Sucres	g %
Protein / Protéines	g %
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	%
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	%
Calcium / Calcium	%
Iron / Fer	%



# Nutrition Claims

When you want to **increase** the amount of certain nutrients, look for:

Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• contains a significant amount of the nutrient</li><li>• an example is “source of fibre”</li></ul>
High or good source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• contains a high amount of the nutrient</li><li>• an example is “high in vitamin C”</li></ul>
Very high or excellent source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• contains a very high amount of the nutrient</li><li>• an example is “excellent source of calcium”</li></ul>



**Nutrition Facts**  
Valeur nutritive

Per 100 mL (4 fl. oz.)	% Daily Value
<b>Amount</b>	
Calories / Calories	% Daily Value
Fat / Lipides	g %
Saturated / saturés	g %
Trans / trans	g %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol	mg %
Sodium / Sodium	mg %
Carbohydrate / Glucides	g %
Fibre / Fibre	g %
Sugars / Sucres	g %
Protein / Protéines	g %
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	%
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	%
Calcium / Calcium	%
Iron / Fer	%



# Health Claims

## Disease risk reduction claims

Example: “**A healthy diet** low in saturated and trans fats may reduce the risk of heart disease. (Naming the food) is free of saturated and trans fats.”



# General Health Claims

- General health claims are generally developed:

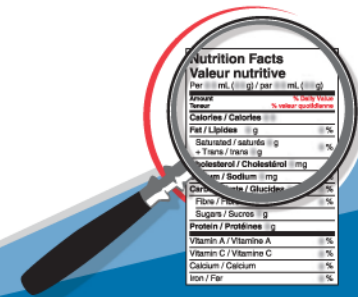
by third party organizations



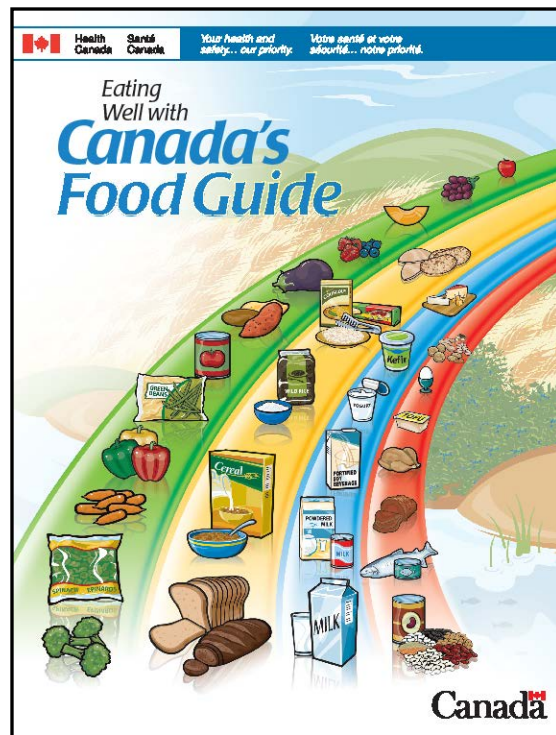
by corporations



- Consumers should not **solely** rely on general health claims to make informed food choices.



# Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide



[www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)





# Vegetables and Fruit

## Canada's Food Guide Messages

- Eat at least one dark green and one orange vegetable each day.
- Choose vegetables and fruit prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt.
- Have vegetables and fruit more often than juice.

## Low sodium vegetable juice

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1 cup (250 mL)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories 50</b>	
<b>Fat</b> 0 g	<b>0 %</b>
Saturated 0 g	<b>0 %</b>
+ Trans 0 g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0 mg	
<b>Sodium</b> 120 mg	<b>5 %</b>
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 11 g	<b>4 %</b>
Fibre 3 g	<b>12 %</b>
Sugars 8 g	
<b>Protein</b> 2 g	
Vitamin A 15 %	Vitamin C 100 %
Calcium 2 %	Iron 4 %

5 % DV or less is a little





## Grain Products

### Canada's Food Guide Messages

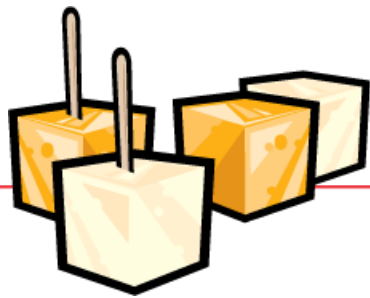
- Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.
- Choose grain products that are lower in fat, sugar or salt.

## Crackers

Nutrition Facts			
Per 4 crackers (20 g)			
Amount	% Daily Value		
Calories	90		
Fat	2 g		3 %
Saturated	0.3 g		2 %
+ Trans	0 g		
Cholesterol	0 mg		
Sodium	90 mg		4 %
Carbohydrate	15 g		5 %
Fibre	3 g		12 %
Sugars	1 g		
Protein	2 g		
Vitamin A	0 %	Vitamin C	0 %
Calcium	2 %	Iron	6 %

5% DV or less is a little





## Milk and Alternatives

### Canada's Food Guide Messages

- Drink skim, 1%, or 2% milk each day (or fortified soy beverages).
- Select lower fat milk alternatives.

## Cheese

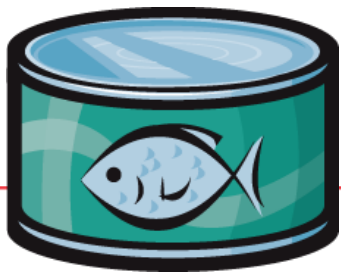
Nutrition Facts	
Per 1 slice (30 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories 110</b>	
<b>Fat 9 g</b>	<b>14 %</b>
Saturated 5 g	27 %
+ Trans 0.4 g	
<b>Cholesterol 25 mg</b>	
<b>Sodium</b>	

## Part Skim Cheese

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1 slice (33 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories 100</b>	
<b>Fat 6 g</b>	<b>9 %</b>
Saturated 4 g	21 %
+ Trans 0.2 g	
<b>Cholesterol 15 mg</b>	
<b>Sodium</b>	

15 % DV or more is a lot





## Meat and Alternatives

### Canada's Food Guide Messages

- Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often.
- Eat at least two Food Guide Servings of fish each week.
- Select lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no added fat or salt.

## Tuna

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1/2 can (60 g drained)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories</b> 60	
<b>Fat</b> 0.4 g	1 %
Saturated 0.1 g	1 %
+ Trans 0 g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30 mg	
<b>Sodium</b> 240 mg	10 %
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 0 g	0 %
Fibre 0 g	0 %
Sugars 0 g	
<b>Protein</b> 14 g	
Vitamin A 2 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 2 %	Iron 10 %

5% DV or less is a little

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 1/2 can (60 g drained)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories / Calories</b>	
<b>Fat / Lipides</b>	
Saturated / saturée	
+ Trans / trans	
<b>Cholesterol / Cholestérol</b>	
<b>Sodium</b>	
<b>Carbohydrate / Glucides</b>	
Fibre	
Sugars / Sucres	
<b>Protein / Protéines</b>	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	
Calcium / Calcium	
Iron / Fer	





## Oils and Fats

### Canada's Food Guide Messages

- Include a small amount - 30 to 45 mL (2 to 3 Tbsp) - of unsaturated fat each day.
- Use vegetable oils such as canola, olive and soybean.
- Choose soft margarines that are low in saturated and trans fats.

## Non-hydrogenated margarine

Nutrition Facts	
Per 2 tsp (10 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories 70</b>	
<b>Fat 8 g</b>	<b>12 %</b>
Saturated 1 g	5 %
+ Trans 0 g	
<b>Cholesterol 0 mg</b>	
<b>Sodium 65 mg</b>	<b>3 %</b>
<b>Carbohydrate 0 g</b>	<b>0 %</b>
Fibre 0 g	0 %
Sugars 0 g	
<b>Protein 0 g</b>	
Vitamin A 10 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 0 %	Iron 0 %

5% DV or less is a little

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 2 tsp (10 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories / Calories</b>	
<b>Fat / Lipides</b>	
Saturated / saturés	
+ Trans / trans	
<b>Cholesterol / Cholestérol</b>	
<b>Sodium</b>	
<b>Carbohydrate / Glucides</b>	
Fibre / Fibre	
Sugars / Sucres	
<b>Protein / Protéines</b>	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	
Calcium / Calcium	
Iron / Fer	



# Canada's Food Guide recommends to *Read the label*

- Compare the Nutrition Facts table on food labels to choose products that contain less fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar and sodium.
- The calories and nutrients listed are for the specific amount of food found at the top of the Nutrition Facts table.

## Read the label

- Compare the Nutrition Facts table on food labels to choose products that contain less fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar and sodium.
- Keep in mind that the calories and nutrients listed are for the amount of food found at the top of the Nutrition Facts table.

## Limit trans fat

When a Nutrition Facts table is not available, ask for nutrition information to choose foods lower in trans and saturated fats.

Nutrition Facts			
Per 0 mL (0 g)			
Amount	% Daily Value		
<b>Calories</b> 0			
<b>Fat</b> 0 g	0 %		
Saturates 0 g	0 %		
+ Trans 0 g			
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0 mg			
<b>Sodium</b> 0 mg	0 %		
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 0 g	0 %		
Fibre 0 g	0 %		
Sugars 0 g			
<b>Protein</b> 0 g			
<b>Vitamin A</b> 0 %	<b>Vitamin C</b> 0 %		
<b>Calcium</b> 0 %	<b>Iron</b> 0 %		



# Nutrition Labelling Summary

- ✓ Use Nutrition Facts, the ingredient list, nutrition claims and health claims to make informed food choices.
- ✓ Nutrition Facts are based on a specific amount of food - compare this to the amount you eat.
- ✓ Use the % Daily Value to see if a food has a little or a lot of a nutrient. Remember:  
**5% DV or less is a little, 15 % DV or more is a lot.**



Use nutrition information on food labels to help you make better food choices.



For more information, visit:

[www.healthcanada.gc.ca/nutritionlabelling](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/nutritionlabelling)

