



Reading a Food Label

1. Check the Serving Size

Is the serving size the same as the amount you are planning to eat? If not, you need to increase or decrease the amount of nutrients listed on the label based on how much you plan to eat. For example, if you are planning to eat 2 cups of rice, the amount of nutrients will be double that listed on the food label.

2. Look for the Total Carbohydrate

Total carbohydrate includes dietary fiber and sugars. Compared to other nutrients, carbohydrate raises blood glucose the most. Think about how many grams (g) of carbohydrate to aim for at each meal.

Note: 1 carb choice = 15 g carbohydrate

3. Subtract the Dietary Fiber

Dietary fiber cannot be digested so you can subtract it from the Total Carbohydrate. Choose foods with at least 3 g of fiber per serving.

4. Subtract half of the Sugar Alcohol

Sugar alcohols, such as sorbitol, xylitol, maltitol and mannitol, are low-calorie sweeteners commonly used in sugar-free products. Because the carbohydrate in sugar alcohols is not fully absorbed, half of the sugar alcohol content can be subtracted from the Total Carbohydrate. For example, if a serving of food contains 4 g of sugar alcohol, subtract 2 g from the Total Carbohydrate.

5. Check the Total Fat

The total amount of fat and the type of fat are important in weight management and prevention of heart disease. Please consult your dietitian to find out the daily amount of fat you need.

Saturated Fat: Aim for less than 1g per serving.

Trans Fat: Aim for 0 g per serving.

6. Sodium

Sodium is a part of salt. Sodium tends to be higher in baked goods, canned foods, instant noodles, cured foods, restaurant food and takeout foods. Low-sodium products contain 140 milligrams (mg) or less per serving. The newest Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 recommend a daily sodium intake of less than 2,300 mg. If you have high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease aim for less than 1,500 mg of sodium.

Brown Rice	
Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size: 1 cup (about 195g)	
Servings Per Container: 10	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 220	Calories from Fat 15
%Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1.5g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Potassium 150mg	4%
Total Carbohydrate 46g	15%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Soluble Fiber 0.5g	
Insoluble Fiber 3.5g	
Sugars 0g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 2%	Iron 6%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	

Reading a Food Label – continued

Common Terms Found on Labels in the United States

Label Term	Definition
Fat Free	0.5 g fat or less per serving
Low Fat	3 g fat or less per serving
Low Saturated Fat	1 g saturated fat or less per serving
Trans Fat-free	0.5 g trans fat or less per serving
Lean	Less than 10 g of fat, 4 g of saturated fat, and 95 mg of cholesterol per serving
Light	1/3 less calories or 1/2 less fat than the regular version; or no more than 1/2 the sodium of the regular version
Reduced	25% less of a specific nutrient, or 25% fewer calories than the regular version
High Fiber	5 g fiber or more per serving
Low Sodium	140 mg sodium or less per serving
Terms listed below are not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (Nutrition information for these terms varies from label to label)	
Low Carb	FDA has not defined this term
Net Carb/ Impact Carb	The grams of carbohydrate remaining after subtracting "sugar alcohols" and "fiber" from Total Carbohydrate grams.