What's in a Label?

From the HRM Video: The New Dietary Guidelines

By law, food packages must show certain facts about the ingredients and nutrition of the food on their product labels. Look at the label in this packet to answer the following questions.

1. What is the name of the product?

2. What is the serving size? How many servings are in a package?

3. How many calories are in one serving?

4. How many of the calories in the serving are from fat?

5. What percentage of these calories come from fat?
6. How many grams of fat are in one serving?

7. What is the percent daily value for fat?

8. How many grams of sugar are in one serving?

9. What is the percent daily value for sugar?

10. Do you think that this food is healthy? Why or why not?
Most prepared foods, such as breads, cereals, canned and frozen foods, snacks, desserts, and drinks, are required to have nutrition facts labels on their packages. These labels provide a wealth of information that can help you eat better and be healthier. Each label follows a standard format and provides the same information.

### Nutrition Facts

**Serving Size**
It's important to pay attention to the serving size and compare it with how much you eat of the food. If you were to eat 2 cups of this product, you would be consuming double the amount of calories and nutrients listed here.

**Nutrients**
This section tells you how much nutrients are in the product. In general, you should limit the amount of fat, cholesterol, and sodium that you eat and make sure that you get enough dietary fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient</th>
<th>Amount Per Serving</th>
<th>% Daily Value*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories from Fat</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>12g</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>3g</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans Fat</td>
<td>1.5g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>30mg</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>470mg</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate</td>
<td>31g</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>0g</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
<td>5g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>5g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vitamin A** | 4%
**Vitamin C** | 2%
**Calcium** | 20%
**Iron** | 4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

### Footnote
While all nutrition label values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet, you can still use the Percentage Daily Value (%DV) as a frame of reference whether you consume more or less than 2,000 calories.

### Calories
This section provides the number of calories in a serving, as well as how many of these calories are from fat. In this example, 44% of the calories are from fat. In general, 40 calories is considered low, 100 calories is moderate, and 400 calories or more is high.

### Percent Daily Value
This tells you what percentage of the daily recommended allowance for each nutrient is provided by this food (based on a 2,000 calorie daily diet). In general, 5% DV or less is considered low and 20% DV or more is considered high.

In this example, eating the entire package (two servings) would mean that you had consumed 36% of your recommended fat intake for the entire day—in just one sitting!

Almost every food package has some sort of health claim printed on it. Fat-free, no added sugars, light—what do these terms mean? Can a manufacturer put anything on their label? Fortunately, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has set guidelines for these terms. Listed below are the definitions of various labels that you may find on food products.

**Free:** The food item has a negligible amount of a certain nutrient per serving.

- **Sugar-free** Less than 0.5 grams (g)
- **Fat-free** Less than 0.5 g
- **Sodium-free** Less than 5 milligrams (mg)
- **Calorie-free** Less than 5 calories
- **Cholesterol-free** Less than 2 mg and 2 g or less of saturated fat

**No Added Sugar** This term can be used if no sugar or sugar containing ingredients is added during processing.

**Low:** A food can be labeled “low” if a person can eat a large amount of the food without exceeding the Daily Value for the nutrient.

- **Low fat** 3 g or less
- **Low saturated fat** 1 g or less
- **Low sodium** 140 mg or less
- **Very low sodium** 35 mg or less
- **Low cholesterol** 20 mg or less and 2 g or less of saturated fat
- **Low calorie** 40 calories or less

**Light:** The term “light” or “lite” can be used to describe a food that has one-third fewer calories, or if the food gets more than half its calories from fat, the reduction needs to be 50 percent of the fat.

**Reduced/Less:** In order for a food to use the words “reduced” or “less” a nutrient must be at least 25 percent less in that product compared to a similar food. For example, if a certain brand of frozen yogurt has 25 percent less fat than ice cream it can use the term “less.”

**More:** This term applies to a food when there is at least a 10 percent higher difference from a similar food. If a food has been nutritionally altered to make that claim the terms “fortified,” “enriched,” and “added” can be applied.

**Lean:** This term is used to describe the fat content of meat, poultry, and seafood. One serving of a lean meat has less than 10 g of fat, less than 4 g of saturated fat, and less than 95 mg of cholesterol per serving and per 100 g.

*This fact sheet is continued on the next page.*
**Extra Lean:** Meat, poultry, and seafood can qualify to carry the “extra lean” claim if they are less than 5 g of fat, less than 2 g saturated fat, and less than 95 mg cholesterol per serving and per 100 grams.

**High:** If a food contains 20 percent or more of the Daily Value of a particular nutrient per serving it can use the terms “high,” “rich in,” or “excellent source.”

**Good Source:** The term “good source” can be applied to a food if that food has 10 to 19 percent of the Daily Value of a nutrient.