Kinship Link

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Pro Kinship for Kids

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Shop Smart - Get the Facts on the Food Labels

Have you been noticing some differences in the way the Nutrition Facts panel looks. The improved Nutrition Facts Label will help you make better decisions about the foods and beverages you eat and drink. Become a smart shopper by reading food labels and start making healthier choices today.

- Find out which foods are good sources of dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium.
- Compare similar foods to find one that meets your calorie needs.
- Look for foods that are lower in saturated fat, trans fat, sodium, and added sugars.

Start with the Servings Per Container and Serving Size

- Look here for both the number of servings in the package and the serving size (the amount for one serving).
- Serving sizes on the new label reflect the portions most people are eating and drinking, not what they should be consuming.
- Remember to compare the portion you take to the serving size listed on the label. If the label serving size is one cup, and you eat two cups, you are getting twice the calories, fat, and other nutrients listed on the label.
- For packages that contain more than one serving, but could reasonably to eaten in one sitting, a second column will be listed to show the nutrition information for the whole package.

Use percent Daily Values

(DV) to help you evaluate how a particular food or beverage fits into your daily eating plan:

- Daily Values are average levels of nutrients for a person eating 2,000 calories a day.
- Remember: percent DV are for the entire day - not just for one meal or snack.
- Everyone is unique. You may need more or less than 2,000 calories per day. For some nutrients, you may also need more or less than 100% DV.
- 5 percent or less is low - try to aim low in saturated fat, trans fat, sodium, and added sugars.
- 20 percent or more is high - try to aim high in vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber.

Limit Saturated Fat, Trans Fat, and Sodium

- Eating less of these may help reduce your risk for some chronic diseases.
- Limit saturated fats to less than 10% of total calories per day starting at age 2 by replacing them with unsaturated fats.
- Limit trans fat to as low as possible.
- Limit sodium to less than 2,300 mg daily and even less for children younger than age 14.

Limit Sources of Added Sugars

Foods and drinks with added sugars often lack nutrients and take the place of more nutritious foods. Examples of added sugars include white granulated and brown sugars, as well as syrups, nectars, honey, and other sweeteners. On the labels, the amount of added sugars will show grams per serving and a precent DV. Products sold separately, such as bags of

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sugar or bottles of honey will only display the percent DV.

⇒ Limit added sugars to less than 10% of your total calories per day starting at age 2. (Sources of added sugars should be avoided for children under the age of 2.)

Nutrients that may be Lacking

The label now puts a focus on nutrients many Americans don't get enough of, including vitamin D, calcium, and potassium. Iron is also listed, since young children, adolescent girls, and women who are capable of becoming pregnant may not get enough. These nutrients have replaced vitamins A and C on the label.

Foods with more that one ingredient must have an ingredient list on the label. Ingredients in the largest amounts (by weight) are listed first.

Food manufactures are also required to state if food products contain any ingredients that are derived from the eight major allergenic foods: milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, and soybeans.

What claims on Food Labels Really Mean

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has strict guidelines on how certain food label terms can be used. FDA also sets standards for health-related claims and nutrient content claims to help consumers identify foods that are rich in nutrients and those that may help to reduce the risk for certain diseases based on the available research. For example, health claims may highlight the link between calcium, vitamin D, and osteoporosis, or sodium and high blood pressure (hypertension).

These are some of the claims that are seen on food packaging, as defined by the FDA:

◊ Reduced - 25% less of the specified nutrient or calories than the usual product.

◊ Good Source of - Provides at least 10% of the DV of a particular nutrient per serving.

◊ Fat-Free/ Sugar-Free - Less than 1/2 gram of fat or sugar per serving.

◊ Low sodium - 140 mg or less of sodium per serving.

◊ High In (or Excellent source of) - Provides 20% or more of the DV of a specified nutrient per serving.


Nutrition Facts
Serving size 2 cups (56g)
Calories 110

Smart Tips to Power Up with Breakfast

As we head off to school and work again it is important to get your body the fuel it needs to move. Breakfast gives you energy to start the day. Get the morning nutrition you need with these quick breakfast ideas.

- Make instant oatmeal with low-fat milk instead of water. Toss in raisins or dried cranberries and chopped walnuts.
- Layer low-fat plain yogurt with your favorite crunchy whole grain cereal and blueberries.
- Blend a breakfast smoothie with low-fat milk, frozen strawberries, and a banana.
- Grits topped with a sprinkle of low-fat cheese and spinach or tomatoes. Add a cooked egg on the side.
- Top a toaster waffle with low-fat yogurt and peach slices.
- Stuff a whole-wheat pita with a sliced, hard-cooked egg and low-fat shredded cheese.
- Spread a flour tortilla with peanut butter. Add a whole banana and roll it up.
- Spread low-fat cream cheese on a whole-grain toasted bagel. Top with sliced strawberries.
- Add lean ham and low-fat Swiss cheese to a toasted whole-grain English muffin.

If your taste buds just don't crave traditional breakfast foods, try these choices:

♦ Hummus spread on a whole-grain toasted bagel with cucumber and tomato slices on top.

♦ Leftover veggie pizza.

♦ Low-fat cottage cheese with fruit.

♦ Leftover rice mixed with low-fat yogurt, dried fruit, and nuts. Sprinkle with cinnamon.

♦ Corn tortilla with mashed avocado, black beans, salsa, and low-fat shredded Cheddar cheese.

Power up with a healthy breakfast and you're off to a great start!

Microwave Denver Scramble Slider

Makes 1 serving.

Ingredients:

1 tbsp. chopped onion
2 tbsp. chopped red or green bell pepper
1 egg
1 tbsp. water
1 thin slice deli ham (chopped)
1 slider-size bun or whole wheat English muffin (split and toasted)

Directions:

1. Place pepper and onion in an 8 oz. small glass bowl. Microwave on high for 30 seconds and stir.
2. Add egg, ham, and water. Beat until egg is blended.
3. Microwave on high for 30 seconds and stir. Microwave until egg is almost set, 30 to 45 seconds longer. Note: Scrambled eggs will continue to cook and firm up after removed from the microwave.
4. Season with salt and pepper if desired. Serve in bun.