



OLV HEALTH & WELLNESS MINISTRY

April 2016 Article

How to Read Food Labels

Food labels tell you the nutrition facts about foods you buy. Use the food labels to help you choose healthier foods.

What to Look For:

Always check the serving size first. All the information on the label is based on serving size. Many packages contain more than 1 serving size.

- **Calorie** information tells you the number of calories in 1 serving. Adjust the number of calories if you eat smaller or larger portions. This number helps determine how foods affect your weight.
- **Total carbohydrates** (carbs) are listed in bold letters to stand out and are measured in grams (g). Sugar, starch, and dietary fiber make up the total carbs on the label. Sugar is listed separately. All of these carbs raise your blood sugar.
- **Sugar**-choose foods low in sugar, less than 5 grams.
- Check **Total Fat** in 1 serving. Pay special attention to the amount of saturated fat in 1 serving. Choose foods that are low in saturated fat. Drink skim milk 1% or 2%, instead of whole milk.
 - If a food has less than 0.5 g of saturated fat in the serving size on the label, the food maker can say it contains no saturated fat. Remember this if you eat more than 1 serving.

Trans Fats on food labels: These fats raise “bad” cholesterol and lower “good” cholesterol.

- These fats are mostly found in snack foods and desserts. Fast food restaurants use trans fats for frying. Trans fats will be listed on the label under total fat; measured in grams.
- Look for foods that have no trans fats or are low in them (1 gram or less).

If you have diabetes and count carbs, use the total carb number.

- **Dietary fiber** is listed just below total carbs. Buy foods with at least 3-4 grams of fiber per serving. Whole-grain breads, fruits and vegetables, and beans and legumes are high in fiber.
- **Sodium** is the main ingredient of salt. American Heart recommends 1500 mg as upper limit for all adults 51 and older.

The percentage for each item on the label is based on eating a 2,000 calorie diet daily.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 slice	
Servings per Container 22	
Amount per serving	
Calories 50	Calories from Fat 10
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 115mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate 10g	3%
Dietary Fiber 5g	20%
Sugars 1g	

Always look at the serving size

This healthy, whole-wheat bread is low in fat and cholesterol

Fiber is a healthy nutrient, so you want AT LEAST 100% each day

Whole wheat bread



ADAM