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Sam Chin, Registered Dietitian

Understanding Nutrition Labels

Reading and understanding the nutrition facts label is an important skill that helps you figure out which foods to buy for you and your family. Whether you're trying to reduce your calories, count the carbohydrates to help manage your diabetes, or want to find more minimally-processed foods, having this skill is a foundation of good health. However, these labels can be confusing - there are so many things to look at! Also, what do all of those numbers and percentages mean? To simplify this process, here are four main things to focus on:

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size 1 cup (227g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	280
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 9g	12%
Saturated Fat 4.5g	23%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 35mg	12%
Sodium 850mg	37%
Total Carbohydrate 34g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 6g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 15g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 320mg	25%
Iron 1.6mg	8%
Potassium 510mg	10%

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Source: <https://www.fda.gov/food/new-nutrition-facts-label/how-understand-and-use-nutrition-facts-label>

- 1) Serving Sizes:** The nutrients listed on the label go according to the amount that's in one serving size, not in the entire product. For example, if you are eating two servings of the food listed above (2 cups total), multiply all of the nutrients listed by 2.
- 2) Calories:** 2,000 calories per day is a general recommendation used for adults, but it can vary depending on age, gender, physical activity, etc. Look at calories to make sure the food/beverage is a good fit for you.
- 3) Nutrients:** To maintain a healthy diet, nutrients you want to get more of include dietary fiber, protein, Vitamin D, Calcium, and Vitamin A. Nutrients you want to limit include saturated fat, trans fat, and added sugars.
- 4) The 5/20 Rule:** When looking at the % Daily Value, use the 5/20 rule: **5%** Daily Value means there is a **low** amount of this nutrient, and **20%** Daily Value means there is a **high** amount. For nutrients you want to get more of, choose foods with 20% or more Daily Value. For nutrients you are looking to reduce, aim for something below 20%. The food product above is high in sodium (37%DV), so you may want to consider other options.

Reducing Your Holiday Stress

Holidays can be a fun and joyful time, but it can also carry stress and anxiety for a variety of reasons.



Maybe you have difficult family relationships, feel drained financially and emotionally, or just feel overwhelmed with hosting a large gathering.

Here are a few ways to handle that holiday stress in a healthy way:

- 1) Keep a Journal:** Reminding yourself of what you have to be thankful for can help put you in a better mindset.
- 2) Donate Your Time:** Volunteering to help others in need can give you a sense of accomplishment, belonging, and positivity. It is also a chance to connect with others.
- 3) Set Boundaries:** It is OKAY to say no to things if you are not feeling it. It is healthy to create some space from certain people, events, etc. that may cause you stress.

Click [HERE](#) for more helpful tips

Happy Holidays, Bulldog Family!



Myth vs. Fact: Are Artificial Sweeteners Bad For Your Health?

Myth: Artificial Sweeteners are harmful chemicals that should be avoided.

Fact: Artificial or zero-calorie sweeteners (Aspartame, Sucralose, etc.) are often used in place of sugar to provide sweetness while reducing calorie and sugar intake, and this can help people with their weight and blood sugar control. However, many people claim that its use will increase the risk of cancer, promote weight gain, and cause headaches. The majority of studies show that artificial sweeteners have very few harmful effects on your health and are considered safe for most of the population by the FDA. However, some people may experience side effects depending on their health condition and the type/amount of artificial sweetener used, so that is something to consider. Just like with anything else in your diet, find a balance and don't overdo it. [Here are some other helpful tips if you are looking to reduce the sugar intake in your diet.](#)

RECIPE: TIS THE SEASON SMOOTHIE

RECIPE ADAPTED FROM VITAMIX

- 3/4 CUP CRANBERRY JUICE
- 2 TSP HONEY, OPTIONAL
- 2 GRANNY SMITH APPLES, QUARTERED, SEEDED
- 1/2 CUP FROZEN OR FRESH RASPBERRIES
- 1/2 CUP ICE CUBES



- 1) ADD ALL INGREDIENTS TO YOUR BLENDER IN THE ORDER LISTED AND SECURE THE LID.
- 2) START ON THE LOWEST SPEED AND THEN QUICKLY INCREASE TO THE HIGHEST SPEED.
- 3) BLEND FOR ABOUT 45 SECONDS OR UNTIL DESIRED CONSISTENCY IS REACHED

FIND OTHER DELICIOUS RECIPES FROM VITAMIX [HERE!](#)