

Food Labels - do they confuse you?

The **Ingredients** list may be most useful.

The **Ingredients** must be shown in decreasing order of weight. This list does not have to show quantity.

If an ingredient is listed highest, the food contains more of that than any other ingredient.

Guideline Daily Amounts (GDAs) are provided on many food labels as a guide to the amount adults should be eating each day. Labels can carry GDAs for calories, fat, saturated fat, salt and sugar.

This allows you to see how much should be in your total daily diet, so you can compare it to a serving of the product – this helps you decide whether the product fits into your diet.

Daily Guideline Amounts		
	Men	Women
Fat	95g	70g
Saturates	30g	20g
Sodium	2.5g	2g
Fibre	20g	16g
Sugar	70g	50g

ENERGY kJ (kilojoules)/ kcals (kilocalories)

People who are watching their weight may find it useful to look at the calorie value. Kilocalories are the same as calories.

FAT

The label shows the total amount of fat and may provide information on the different types.

There are three main types of fat – saturates, polyunsaturates and monounsaturates.

Example of a label

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
TYPICAL VALUES (Cooked as per instructions)		
	Per serving	per 100g
ENERGY	1462 kJ 351 kcal	975 kJ. 234 kcal
PROTEIN	9.0g	6.0g
CARBOHYDRATE	28.2g	18.8g
of which sugars	3.0g	2.0g
of which starch	25.2g	16.8g
FATS	23.3g	14.9g
of which saturates	7.6g	5.1g
of which mono-unsaturates	10.9g	7.3g
of which polyunsaturates	2.7g	1.8g
FIBRE	1.6g	1.1g
SODIUM	0.6g	0.4g
PER SERVING	351 CAL	2.3G FAT

Look at the nutrition information:-
'Carbohydrate' includes all the starch and sugar in the food.
'of which sugars' includes natural sugars as well as added sugar (e.g. fruit sugar, milk sugar).

Look for sugar under its different names on the ingredients list – glucose, sucrose, concentrated fruit juice, molasses, honey, any syrup, dextrose or lactose.
Fructose, sorbitol, manitol and isomalt are sugar substitutes. They have the same calories as sugar.

What to look for on the nutrition table	
Healthy Eating Checklist	
1 st	Fat and Saturates
2 nd	Sodium
3 rd	Fibre and Sugars
4 th	Energy (calories)

The healthiest foods are those with the least fat and sugar and the highest fibre.

If a **SPECIAL CLAIM** is made it must be backed up by further information on the packet.

Treat claims such as low fat, low sugar with care. These are not legal definitions so there is no rule on exactly how much fat a low fat food can contain. Use the rules of thumb to help you decide if it's the food for you

For a complete main meal or in 100g of a snack food use the following rules of thumb

A lot: These amounts or more	Nutrient	A little: These amounts or less
10g	Sugars	2g
20g	Fat	3g
5g	Saturates	1g
3g	Fibre	0.5g
0.5g	Sodium	0.1g

Trade Offs:

Sometimes there is a trade off to decide which food to choose. For example a food may contain a little fat but a lot of sodium. You need to decide which is most important for you.

Sodium is the active ingredient in salt. If you are trying to reduce your salt intake, choose foods lowest in sodium

If you do not go outside very often, look for foods fortified with Vitamins A and D.