



Maintain, No Gain!

Healthy Holiday Challenge



Week 4: Focus on food labels and create a holiday meal makeover

You're well on your way to reaching the Holiday Challenge halfway point. Way to go! Now we'll build on what we have already learned.

Complete this week's challenge

- Read the labels on the foods you use to prepare your holiday meals.
- Log all your meals this week, and pick one thing to track on the food label, such as calories or fiber; record this information in on your Food and Physical Activity Log.

The importance of reading food labels

Food labels are printed on most products we buy, and they provide us with nutritional information about the food we eat. It's important to refer to the label when you shop, and as you plan and prepare your meals. Food labels make it easier to compare products and make healthier choices. Since many holiday foods tend to be high in fat, sugar, and calories, when buying ingredients for your holiday dishes don't forget to read those labels, too.

Tips for reading food labels

- Start at the top. Serving size and calories are both located there.
- Make sure you know how many servings are in a product. Then ask yourself "how many servings am I consuming?" The number of servings you actually eat determines how many calories you consume.
- Look for words "partially hydrogenated" in the ingredient list. This is trans fat and should be avoided.
- Check the fat facts on the label. Look for foods that have zero trans fat and are low in saturated fat.
- Keep an eye on sodium. The average healthy person should consume no more than 2,300 mg/day.
- Look for foods high in fiber. Fiber keeps you feeling full longer.

Understand what you're reading

- Low-calorie: 40 calories or less
- Fat-free: Less than 1/2 gram of fat
- Cholesterol-free: Less than 2 mg of cholesterol and less than 2 g of saturated fat
- Sodium-free: Less than 5 mg of sodium
- Very low-sodium: 35 mg or less of sodium
- Sugar-free: less than 1/2 g of sugar
- High-fiber: 5 g or more of fiber
- Trans fat-free: Less than 1/2 g of trans fat

Understand a Food Label

...and make better choices for your health

1 Count Calories
• Look at the serving size, the number of servings, and the number of calories per serving.

2 Check these for heart health
• Choose foods that are lower in saturated fat and sodium.
• Keep trans fat to 0.

3 Is it nutritionally valuable?
• Select foods that are nutrient dense and a good source of fiber.

Tip...
Consider how added sugars fit your daily budget.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories 230	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

* 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.

Disclaimer: As with any nutrition and/or exercise program, consult your doctor before beginning, especially if you have a sedentary lifestyle or a health condition that requires special consideration.

Sources: webmd.com, choosemyplate.gov