

# Handout for Healthy Eating “Spin the Wheel” or “Pick a Card Game”



## Reading Food Labels

### How to Understand and Use the Nutrition Facts Label

source: FDA

People look at food labels for different reasons. But whatever the reason, many consumers would like to know how to use this information more effectively and easily. The following label-building skills are intended to make it easier for you to use nutrition labels to make quick, informed food choices that contribute to a healthy diet.

### The Nutrition Facts Label - An Overview:

The information in the main or top section (see #1-4 and #6 on the sample nutrition label below), can vary with each food product; it contains product-specific information (serving size, calories, and nutrient

information). The bottom part (see #5 on the sample label below) contains a footnote with Daily Values (DVs) for 2,000 and 2,500 calorie diets. This footnote provides recommended dietary information for important nutrients, including fats, sodium and fiber. The footnote is found only on larger packages and does not change from product to product.

Sample label for  
Macaroni & Cheese

| Nutrition Facts                                       |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Serving Size 1 cup (228g)<br>Servings Per Container 2 |                       |
| Amount Per Serving                                    |                       |
| Calories 250  | Calories from Fat 110 |
|   | % Daily Value*        |
| Total Fat 12g   | 18%                   |
| Saturated Fat 3g                                      | 15%                   |
| Trans Fat 3g  |                       |
| Cholesterol 30mg                                      | 10%                   |
| Sodium 470mg  | 20%                   |
| Total Carbohydrate 31g                                | 10%                   |
| Dietary Fiber 0g                                      | 0%                    |
| Sugars 5g   |                       |
| Protein 5g  |                       |
| Vitamin A   | 4%                    |
| Vitamin C   | 2%                    |
| Calcium   | 20%                   |
| Iron  | 4%                    |

① **Start Here** →

② **Check Calories**

③ **Limit these Nutrients**

④ **Get Enough of these Nutrients**

⑤ **Quick Guide to % DV**

- 5% or less is Low
- 20% or more is High

⑥

In this Nutrition Facts label we have colored certain sections to help you focus on those areas that will be explained in detail. You will not see these colors on the food labels on products you purchase.

1. The first place to start when you look at the Nutrition Facts label is the serving size and the number of servings in the package. Serving sizes are standardized to make it easier to compare similar foods; they are provided in familiar units, such as cups or pieces,

followed by the metric amount, e.g., the number of grams. The size of the serving on the food package influences the number of calories and all the nutrient amounts listed on the top part of the label. **Pay attention to the serving size, especially how many servings there are in the food package. Then ask yourself, "How many servings am I consuming"?**

- Calories provide a measure of how much energy you get from a serving of this food. Many Americans consume more calories than they need without meeting recommended intakes for a number of nutrients. The calorie section of the label can help you manage your weight (i.e., gain, lose, or maintain.) **Remember: the number of servings you consume determines the number of calories you actually eat (your portion amount).**

| Amount Per Serving  |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Calories</b> 250 | Calories from Fat 110 |

In the example, there are 250 calories in one serving of this macaroni and cheese. How many calories from fat are there in ONE serving? Answer: 110 calories, which means almost half the calories in a single serving come from fat. What if you ate the whole package content? Then, you would consume two servings, or 500 calories, and 220 would come from fat.

- Limit These Nutrients** The nutrients listed first are the ones Americans generally eat in adequate amounts, or even too much. They are identified in yellow as **Limit these Nutrients**. Eating too much fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, or sodium may increase your risk of certain chronic diseases, like heart disease, some cancers, or high blood pressure.

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Total Fat</b> 12g    | <b>18%</b> |
| <b>Saturated Fat</b> 3g | <b>15%</b> |
| <i>Trans Fat</i> 3g     |            |
| <b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg | <b>10%</b> |
| <b>Sodium</b> 470mg     | <b>20%</b> |

The recommended total carbohydrates for adults with diabetes is 135 to 170 grams per day or 45 to 70 per meal. Those with diabetes should meet with a dietitian for more teaching on how fiber and undigestible carbohydrates affect blood sugar.

|                               |            |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g | <b>10%</b> |
| <b>Dietary Fiber</b> 0g       | <b>0%</b>  |
| <b>Sugars</b> 5g              |            |

- Get Enough of These**  
Most Americans don't get enough dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron in their diets. They are identified in blue as **Get Enough of these Nutrients**. Eating enough of these nutrients can improve your health and help reduce the risk of some diseases and conditions. For example, getting enough calcium may reduce the risk of osteoporosis, a condition that results in brittle bones as one ages (see [calcium section below](#)). Eating a diet high in dietary fiber promotes healthy bowel function.

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Dietary Fiber</b> 0g | <b>0%</b>  |
| <b>Vitamin A</b>        | <b>4%</b>  |
| <b>Vitamin C</b>        | <b>2%</b>  |
| <b>Calcium</b>          | <b>20%</b> |
| <b>Iron</b>             | <b>4%</b>  |

Additionally, a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and grain products that contain dietary fiber, particularly soluble fiber, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease.



Artificial Sweeteners

### Artificial Sweeteners

Artificial sweeteners may assist in weight management, prevention of dental **caries**, and control of blood **glucose** for diabetics. It has also been suggested that low-calorie sweeteners may stimulate the appetite, but the bulk of evidence does not support this hypothesis. Conclusive research demonstrates that artificial sweeteners have no effect on **carbohydrate metabolism**, short- or long-term blood glucose control, or **insulin** secretion, and they are thus an excellent sugar alternative for diabetics. There products, though the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval process for artificial sweeteners involves a comprehensive analysis of scientific data to satisfy safety requirements. All "generally recognized as safe" (GRAS) sweeteners have undergone extensive safety testing and have been carefully reviewed by the FDA.

### Effects of Alcohol on Diabetes

Read more: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/28394-alcohol-affect-blood-sugar-levels/#ixzz1vcrluLJJ>



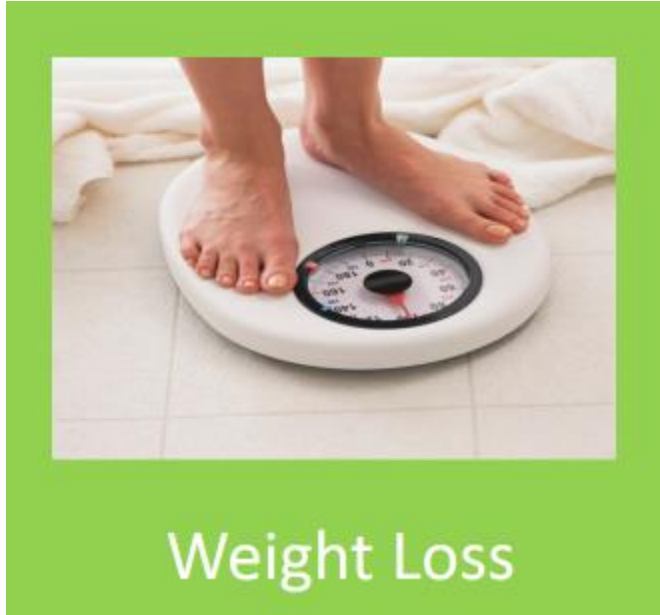
Alcohol and Diabetes

Not only does drinking alcohol cause blood sugar to drop, it also results in increased difficulty for the body to regulate blood sugar levels. Because the liver prioritizes metabolizing alcohol over regulating other blood sugar levels, blood sugar does not receive the typical secretions of glucagon to then increase blood sugar levels. For this reason, it is important for people (especially those who have a condition such as diabetes) to consume carbohydrates or take a carbohydrate-type tablet, such as an oral glucose tablet or gel.

### Long-Term Blood Sugar Control

While the immediate reaction to alcohol consumption may be low blood sugar, over time, chronic drinking can lead to high blood sugar. Frequent heavy drinkers' insulin

slowly loses effectiveness in regulating blood sugar levels. This is the body's way of attempting to maintain blood sugar balance. However, the loss of insulin effectiveness can cause the blood sugar levels to rise instead of lower when alcohol is consumed. This can have severe long-term effects, such as liver damage and diabetes. Both conditions require medical treatment and can be life-threatening if left untreated.



## WEIGHT LOSS TIPS

Read more:

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/293225-diabetic-diet-free-foods/#ixzz24yfuk000>

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Following are tips that may help you lose weight and keep it off. Ask your caregiver for the best diet plan for you.

**DIET PLANS:** Do not try a crash or fad diet that suggests you eat less than 1000 to 1200 calories each day. Keep your kitchen full of healthy foods on your diet plan. Eat healthy foods from all 5 food groups each day: breads, dairy, fruits, vegetables, meat and fish. Eat only small amount of fats, like 1 to 3 teaspoons each day of oils, nuts, dressings, and margarine. Bake, roast, or broil your food instead of frying.

**FIBER** High fiber foods help with weight loss

because they help fill you up. You may feel full longer because some kinds of fiber help food stay in your stomach longer. They also help prevent certain kinds of cancer if eaten over long periods of time. Eat high fiber and starchy foods, such as whole grain breads, pasta, and potatoes. Other high fiber foods are cooked dried beans, raw or steamed vegetables, and fruit. You should eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day. The vegetables may be eaten raw or steamed. Eat cooked vegetables without sauces and with little margarine.

**FLUIDS:** Drink 6 to 8 (soda-pop can size) glasses of liquid each day. Or, follow your caregiver's advice if you must limit the amount of liquid you drink. Some times when you feel a food craving, you are really more thirsty than hungry. So, make sure that you have water and other low calorie liquids available all the time. Limit fruit juices to 1 to 2 small glasses per day because they are high in calories. Limit how much alcohol you drink. Alcoholic drinks have many calories and can weaken your will power with food. Alcohol can also make you hungrier than usual.

**PROTEIN FOODS:** Make sure your diet plan allows plenty of protein while you are losing weight. This will help you feel stronger while you are eating a lot fewer calories. Choose meat, fish, and poultry that is very lean before cooking. Remove all fat from meats and skin from poultry before cooking. Nuts and seeds are high in fat so limit the amount you eat. Do not eat more than 3 to 4 eggs a week. Use low fat and fat-free dairy products, salad dressings, and cheeses.

**SNACKS:** Fresh vegetables with fat-free dip are a healthy snack food. Fat-free rice cakes and rye crackers contain fiber and starch which helps you feel full. Avoid foods high in sugar, such as candy, cookies, and pastries. Also, avoid high fat snacks, such as nuts, regular chips, and chocolate foods. Instead try baked or fat-free chips, air-popped popcorn, or fresh fruit between meals.

**MEALS:** Enjoy your food by sitting down and eating slowly. Mealtime should be relaxing and enjoyable. Do not skip meals. Missing a regular meal can make you even hungrier at the next one. You may then overeat without meaning to. Many people do not like breakfast. Even so, try to eat something light in the morning. It will give you energy for the busy time of day and may prevent a binge later.

**EXERCISE:** Check with your caregivers before starting to exercise if you have not been exercising. Work with your caregiver to plan an exercise program special for you. Even 20 to 30 minutes a day of activity will help you lower your weight. It will lower the fat percent of your body weight and raise the amount of muscle you have. This increases the number of calories you burn each day.





## Free Foods

### Free Foods

The diabetes diet is not a restrictive diet, according to MayoClinic.com, but is a healthy eating plan designed to promote a healthy weight and normal blood sugars. The diet consists of a variety of nutritious foods eaten in moderate amounts at consistent mealtimes. Some foods on the diabetic meal plan are considered free foods and can be eaten at any time. A diabetic free food has less than 20 calories and 5g of carbohydrate.

### Beverages

Diabetic free foods can be enjoyed in moderate amounts as often as you like, according to MayoClinic.com. Drinking fluids regularly helps you stay hydrated. Adequate hydration is necessary for everyday bodily functions and helps you maintain your energy levels. There are a number of beverage choices you can drink without guilt on the diabetic diet. Beverages on the diabetic free food list include broth, diet soda, club soda, plain coffee and tea, sugar-free drink mixes, carbohydrate-free flavored waters, tonic water, sparkling water, mineral water and plain water.

### Condiments and Seasonings

Condiments and seasonings can make bland food more flavorful. You have a number of different choices you can use to enhance the flavor of your food without adding calories or carbohydrates. Condiments on the free food list include horseradish, lemon juice, lime juice, low-sodium soy sauce, mustard and vinegars. Seasonings on the diabetic free food list include cooking spray, cooking wine, flavored extracts, garlic, herbs, hot pepper sauce, pimento, spices and Worcestershire sauce.

### Other Foods

Sugar-free foods are not diabetic free foods. Many sugar-free foods contain carbohydrates. Carbohydrates in foods raise blood sugar. If a food item is labeled as sugar-free read the nutrition facts label for the carbohydrate content. A food item with more than 5g of carbohydrate per serving is not a diabetic free food. Other diabetic free foods include sugar-free gelatin, sugar-free gum, sugar substitute, salsa and tossed greens.

### Portion-Controlled Diabetic Free Foods

Portion sizes count for some diabetic free foods. You can have up to three servings a day of a portion controlled diabetic free food. Examples of portion-controlled diabetic free foods include 1 tbs fat-free cream cheese, 1 tbs fat-free mayonnaise, 4 tbs fat-free margarine, 1 tbsp. of fat-free salad dressing, 1 tbs of fat-free sour cream, 2 tbs whipped topping, 1 tbs unsweetened cocoa, 1 tbs ketchup, 1 1/2 large unsweetened pickles, 1 tbs taco sauce, one piece sugar-free candy, 2 tsp, sugar-free jelly and 2 tbs sugar-free pancake syrup.



Dietary fiber is found in whole grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables. Despite fiber being found in various foods, fiber intake among Americans is falling far short of the recommendation. The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey found that nine out of 10 Americans are not meeting daily recommendations for dietary fiber. Fiber has various health benefits, such as maintaining bowel health, decreasing cholesterol and providing satiety. The addition of fiber-rich foods may also be beneficial for diabetics, as fiber helps to regulate blood sugar levels after meals.

### **Provides Satiety**

Dietary fiber is a non-digestible carbohydrate, meaning the body does not digest or absorb fiber. Rather, fiber provides bulk to stool, promotes bowel movements, binds to toxins in the gut and helps to slow down the digestion process. This slowing of digestion allows you to feel fuller faster, leading to less food consumed. For a diabetic, this can help to decrease the overall glycemic load of a meal by decreasing the amount of carbohydrates consumed at one time. This also allows for better weight management, which is another factor in glycemic control.

### **Regulates Blood Glucose**

Since fiber helps to slow down digestion, it slows down the amount of carbohydrates absorbed into the blood. Instead of sharp, fast spikes in blood sugar after a meal, fiber slows down that process, providing a more steady and attenuated increase in blood sugar. Overall, this helps to prevent wide swings in blood sugar.

### **Improves Blood Pressure**

While not completely understood, fiber intake has been associated with improved values of blood pressure. Fiber-rich foods are high in the minerals potassium and magnesium, which may be involved in the reduction of hypertension, or high blood pressure.

### **Decreases Triglycerides and Cholesterol**

Triglycerides are fats that originate in some foods naturally and are synthesized from excess carbohydrates or protein. Studies indicate that increases in fiber intake leads to decreases in triglycerides. Fiber also helps to decrease cholesterol in two ways. First, fiber acts as a sponge in the gut, trapping bile and excreting it from the body. Bile is needed to digest fat and is typically recycled and used continuously. Cholesterol is needed to make bile, so when a decrease of bile occurs, cholesterol is used to synthesize more. Secondly, fiber contains a compound that acts in the liver to prevent the synthesis of new cholesterol.

### **Dietary Recommendation**

The International Life Sciences Institute reviewed past research on fiber and its health benefits and concluded that fiber helps to prevent and manage chronic diseases. Its expert panel recommends fiber intake of 14 grams for every 1,000 calories consumed. However, research conducted specifically on diabetics from the VA Medical Center in Kentucky found that a diet including 55 percent to 60 percent from carbohydrates and 15 g to 25 g of fiber per 1,000 calories provided the best glycemic control and reduction in cholesterol levels. Diabetics are at higher risk for heart disease related to high levels of cholesterol, triglycerides, and blood pressure. Increasing fiber intake may not only improve blood sugar levels, but also help prevent heart disease