



GS1

GROCERY SHOPPING

Nutrition Facts Label Smarts

Time: 70 Minutes

Understanding what's in our food is a critical part of choosing healthier options. Learn how to read nutrition facts labels by comparing similar products. Apply your new knowledge of calories, sodium, sugar, saturated fat and protein in a mock grocery store. Enjoy the feeling of being a confident, healthy shopper.

OBJECTIVES:

Identify correct serving sizes and corresponding calorie totals.

Describe the difference between the nutrients you should limit and those you need to stay healthy.

Choose the healthier option when comparing the nutrition facts labels on two similar products.

SETUP

- Review resource list and print it out. Purchase all necessary supplies after reviewing the [HFL Cost Calculator](#).
- Set up demo station with the necessary activity resources.
- Chop cilantro and red onion per recipe and stock grocery bags with measured ingredients beforehand.
- Place canned ingredients and the remaining shared ingredients at the demo station.
- Provide computer, internet access, and projector, if available.

INTRO (10 Minutes)

- Welcome participants and introduce yourself.
- Take care of any housekeeping items (closest bathroom, water fountain, etc.).
- Give a brief description of the educational experience.
- Engage in an icebreaker to gauge topic knowledge from the bank of options provided in the [Welcome Toolkit](#).

DEMO (10 Minutes)

- Play video(s) or demonstrate content (see demo script).

ACTIVITY (20 Minutes)

- Participants will tour a mock grocery store and practice comparing nutrition facts labels to identify healthier food choices.

RECAP (10 Minutes)

- Pass out handout(s) and invite participants to taste their healthy dish while going through the handout(s) together.

GOAL SETTING/CLOSING (20 Minutes)

- Engage in a goal setting activity from the bank of options provided in the [Welcome Toolkit](#). Pass out the Setting SMART Goals handout to participants.
- Thank participants and encourage them to join the next activity. (Provide date/time/location if known.)



NOTES: Read legal liability disclaimer before activity: [Food Liability Disclaimer](#). Refer to Resource List for all necessary supplies and handouts. This Healthy for Life® Educational Experience was created by Aramark and the American Heart Association as part of our Healthy for Life® 20 By 20 Initiative. We are proud to be working together to help improve the health of all Americans.

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Nutrition Facts Label Smarts Resource List

HANDOUTS/VIDEOS

Find these resources on AHA's YouTube channel or heart.org/healthyforgood

- Video – [Food Label Smarts Demo](#)
- Article – [Understanding Food Nutrition Labels](#)

Find these resources in this lesson

- Recipe – [Black Bean Salad \(or Salsa\)](#)
- Handout – [Eat Smart with Food Nutrition Labels](#)
- Handout – [Setting SMART Goals](#)

SPACE SETUP

- Chairs and tables for participants
- Demo table
- Pens for participants
- Folders
- Computer, internet access, and projector, if available

ACTIVITY INGREDIENTS* AND SUPPLIES**

- 1 15.5-ounce can low-sodium or no-salt-added black beans
- 1 15.5-ounce can regular black beans
- 1 15-ounce can low-sodium or no-salt-added whole-kernel corn
- 1 15-ounce can regular whole-kernel corn
- 1 15-ounce can no-salt-added, diced tomatoes
- 1 15-ounce can regular diced tomatoes
- ½ cup diced red onion
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Juice of 1 lime
- Grocery bags
- Measuring cups/spoons
- Can opener
- Bowls (for tasting)
- Forks (for tasting)
- Optional: If available, use sinks and supply colander to rinse and drain the canned vegetables

*Recipe serves 6 people; please multiply ingredients as necessary for your participants.

**Purchase appropriate number of supplies for your participants. Participants can divide into teams and share supplies and ingredients.

Nutrition Facts Label Smarts Demo Script

Use if video capabilities are unavailable.

Pass out the Nutrition Facts Label handout before the demonstration so participants can follow along.



SAY:

Learning how to read and understand food labels can help you make healthier choices. I'm going to guide you through some tips on making the most of the information on the Nutrition Facts label. We'll be referencing the new Nutrition Facts label. You should know that packaged foods are gradually transitioning to this updated label. A big difference is that the new label shows **Added Sugars** as well as **Total Sugars**. Added Sugars are sugars put into foods during preparation or processing. Naturally occurring sugars like fructose (in fruit) and lactose (in milk) aren't considered added sugars. The AHA recommends less than 150 calories or 9 teaspoons of added sugar for most men and less than 100 calories or 6 teaspoons of added sugar for most women and for children and teens.

First, let's start with the serving information at the top of the label. This will tell you the size of a single serving and the total number of servings per container or package.

Next, we can check total calories per serving. It's important to pay attention to the calories per serving and how many servings you're really eating. If you double the servings you eat, you double the calories and nutrients.

Now look at the **Saturated Fat**, **Trans Fat** and **Sodium** numbers. We want to limit these nutrients. The AHA recommends no more than 13 grams of saturated fat, as little trans fat as possible and no more than 1,500 mg of sodium per day. These recommendations are based on a 2,000-calorie diet.

Moving down the label, we can see **Dietary Fiber**, **Protein**, **Calcium**, **Iron**, vitamins and other nutrients you need every day. You want to make sure to get enough of these for a balanced diet.

If we look on the right side of the label, we can see **% Daily Value**. This number tells us the percentage of each nutrient in a single serving, in terms of the daily recommended amount. As a guide, when we want to consume less of a nutrient (such as saturated fat or sodium), choose foods with a % Daily Value of 5 percent or less. If we want to consume more of a nutrient (such as fiber), we can look for foods with a higher % Daily Value, such as 20 percent or more.

I have a few final tips to help us all navigate a Nutrition Facts label.

Remember the information shown on this label is based on 2,000 calories per day. We may need to eat less or more than 2,000 calories depending on our age, gender, activity level and whether we're trying to lose, gain or maintain weight. Your health care provider can help you figure out how many calories you need.

Also, if the label says a food contains "0 grams" (g) of trans fat, but includes "partially hydrogenated oil" in the ingredient list, it means the food contains trans fat, but less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving. So, if we eat more than one serving, we could quickly reach our daily limit of trans fat.

Nutrition Facts Label Smarts Activity Script

Display canned grocery items at the demo station. Pair the “regular” and “better” foods next to each other. Place the bottle(s) of cider vinegar, olive oil, jar of garlic and limes on the end of the table.

Divide participants into teams and distribute the recipe.



SAY:

Each team will come up to the front to pick up the required recipe ingredients and the recipe.

Remind participants to share the following ingredients with one another: cider vinegar, olive oil, garlic and limes.



SAY:

When you come up to the demo station, grab a grocery bag, that’s pre-filled with your cilantro and diced red onion. As you start shopping through the mock grocery store, you’ll want to look at the Nutrition Facts label and compare the different canned options. Make sure to grab the healthiest version of the ingredient and return to your team area to start cooking!



Once everyone has finished making the dish, divide it into tasting bowls and share with your team.

Black Bean Salad (or Salsa)

Makes 6 servings; $\frac{3}{4}$ cup per serving
Per serving: 142 Calories; 0.5 g Saturated Fat; 11 mg Sodium



Serve chilled as a great side salad with a meal. Or, warm in the microwave and use as a filling for tacos!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 15.5-ounce can low-sodium or no-salt-added black beans
- 1 15.5-ounce can low-sodium or no-salt-added whole-kernel corn
or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup frozen whole-kernel corn
- 1 medium bell pepper, diced, or 1 medium diced tomato
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup red onion, diced
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Juice of 1 lime

DIRECTIONS

1. Toss together all the ingredients. Chill for at least one hour.

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EAT SMART

WITH FOOD NUTRITION LABELS

The Nutrition Facts label can help you make healthier choices. **Use it!**
Here's what to look for:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Nutrition Facts	
6, 12, 18 or 24 servings per container	
Serving size	1 egg (50g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	60
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 4g	5%
Saturated Fat 1g	6%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 1g	
Monounsaturated Fat 2g	
Cholesterol 170mg	57%
Sodium 65mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 0g	0%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 0g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 6g	13%
Vitamin D 6mcg	30%
Calcium 28mg	2%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 69mg	2%
Vitamin E 5mg	35%
Riboflavin 0.3mg	25%
Folate 45mcg	10%
Vitamin B12 1mcg	40%
Biotin 10mcg	35%
Pantothenic Acid 1mg	20%
Iodine 60mcg	40%
Zinc 1mg	10%
Selenium 22mcg	40%
Molybdenum 8mcg	20%
Choline 147mg	25%
*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.	
Saturated Fat 25% less than ordinary eggs: 1g vs 1.5g (quantities rounded)	

1 Start with serving information.
This will tell you the size of a single serving and how many servings are in the package.

2 Check total calories.
Do the math to know how many calories you're really getting if you eat the whole package.

3 Limit certain nutrients.
Compare labels and choose options with lower amounts of added sugars, sodium, saturated fat and trans fat when possible.

4 Get enough of beneficial nutrients.
Eat foods with nutrients your body needs, like calcium, choline, dietary fiber, iron, magnesium, potassium, and Vitamins A, C, D and E.*

5 Understand % Daily Value.

- The % Daily Value (DV) tells you the percentage of each nutrient in a single serving in terms of the daily recommended amount.
- To consume less of a nutrient (such as saturated fat or sodium), choose foods with a lower % DV (5% or less).
- To consume more of a nutrient (such as fiber or potassium), choose foods with a higher % DV (20% or more).

For more tips and tricks on eating smart, visit HEART.ORG/EATSMART

EAT SMART ADD COLOR MOVE MORE BE WELL

*Source: 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

SPECIFIC

- What exactly do you want to accomplish?

MEASURABLE

- How will you track your progress towards your goal?

ACHIEVABLE

- Is reaching your goal possible with your full effort?

REALISTIC

- Do you have the resources and ability to achieve your goal? If not, how can you get them?

TIME-BOUND

- When will your goal be achieved?

EXAMPLE OF A SMART GOAL:

I will increase the number of fruit servings I eat daily by 2 cups within the next 3 months.

Personal SMART goal:
