

# Learning the label lingo

## Percent Daily Value



Nutrition Facts labels can help you find foods low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium, so you can keep track of the number of grams or milligrams you consume each day of each nutrient group. You'll see percentages on food labels that are based on recommended daily allowances, which means the amount of a particular nutrient a person should get each day. This is referred to as the Percent Daily Value (PDV). For instance, there's a recommended daily allowance for fat, so the food label might say that one serving of a food meets 10 percent of the daily value.

Keep in mind that daily values are based on an adult's needs and an average daily diet of 2,000 calories. Children may need more or less of certain nutrients, depending on their age and size.

### **Count more than calories—count nutrients, too**

Some Percent Daily Values are based on the amount of calories and energy a person needs. These include carbohydrates, proteins and fat. Other PDVs, like those for sodium, potassium, vitamins and minerals, stay the same no matter how many calories a person eats. The PDV helps you determine if a serving of food is high or low in a nutrient. Choose foods that give you enough of the nutrients you need for good health and limit those that may contribute to health problems.

Use the food labels as your guide to better food choices. If you want to consume less of a nutrient (such as saturated fat, cholesterol or sodium), choose foods with a lower PDV—five percent or less is low. If you want to consume more of a nutrient (such as fiber), seek foods with a higher PDV—20 percent or more is high.



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# Your nutrition guide

Use this chart as a helpful resource.

<p><b>Calories:</b> Calorie-free: Less than 5 calories Low-calorie: 40 calories or less</p> <p><b>Fat:</b> Fat-free: Less than 0.5 grams Low fat: 3 grams or less of total fat Reduced fat: At least 25 percent less fat than the regular version</p> <p><b>Cholesterol:</b> Cholesterol-free: Less than 2mg Low cholesterol: 20mg or less Reduced cholesterol: At least 25 percent less cholesterol than the regular version</p>	<p><b>Sodium:</b> Sodium-free: Less than 5mg Very low sodium: 35mg or less Low sodium: 140mg or less Reduced sodium: At least 25 percent less than the regular version</p> <p><b>Sugar:</b> Sugar-free: Less than 0.5 grams Reduced sugar: At least 25 percent less sugar than the regular version</p> <p><b>Fiber:</b> High fiber: 5 grams or more Good source of fiber: 2.5 to 4 grams of fiber</p>
Amounts shown are per serving	

## Looking for nutrition support?

Check out For Your Health’s *Eat Right* section from the Personal Health Manager, which offers a *Healthy Eating* program that’s based on nationally recognized nutrition guidelines. This is one of the many online wellness tools and resources available through Blue Access® for Members.

Want to feel your 100 percent best? Keep an eye on food labels and make sure you get 100 percent of the fiber, vitamins and other nutrients you need every day.