

# Mastering the label lingo

## Cholesterol and sodium



You've been learning about the different nutrients listed on the Nutrition Facts label. A healthy diet emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk, and milk products. Protein sources should include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans and nuts, and it's important to choose foods that are low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt and added sugar.

### Food label reading isn't that hard, is it?

Now you can learn even more about food labels by zeroing in on what's recommended for cholesterol and sodium in your diet. The American Heart Association offers the following guidelines to help you understand cholesterol:

- **Cholesterol free** – less than two milligrams of cholesterol and two grams (or less) of saturated fat
- **Low cholesterol** – 20 or fewer milligrams of cholesterol and two grams or less of saturated fat
- **Reduced cholesterol** – at least 25 percent less cholesterol than the regular product and two grams or less of saturated fat

Choose a diet low in cholesterol—less than 300mg each day. You can watch your cholesterol by:

- Eating more grain products, vegetables and fruits
- Limiting your intake of high cholesterol foods



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# The lowdown on sodium



The Daily Value of sodium consumption is 2,400 milligrams per day, which is about the same as one tablespoon of salt. Read the Nutrition Facts label to determine the amount of sodium in foods.

- Sodium free or no sodium – less than five milligrams of sodium and no sodium chloride in ingredients
- Very low sodium – 35 milligrams or less of sodium
- Low sodium – 140 milligrams or less of sodium
- Reduced or less sodium – at least 25 percent less sodium than the regular product

You can consume less sodium by:

- Using fresh produce instead of canned and processed foods which contain high amounts of sodium
- Learning to use spices and herbs to enhance flavor instead of adding salt

A healthy diet and lifestyle are among the best weapons you have to fight disease. Make these simple guidelines part of your plan for long-term benefits to your health and well-being.