

Reading Food Labels

Make label reading a habit. Identify healthy food choices and compare with less healthy choices. Some of the information on food labels can be misleading.

Misleading Information

Some examples:

“Lite” can be light in colour and flavour, rather than light in fat or sugar content

“Baked not fried” does not necessarily mean less fat is added in manufacture

Nutrition Information Panel:

- This is the most useful part of a food label and should always give you accurate information
- Usually found on back or side of package or on box of products like cereal bars
- Look for the per 100g column when you want to compare one product with another
- Look for the per serving quantity on the packaging as well – compare one brand with another. For instance some slimming products may simply have smaller serving sizes.

Some useful numbers to remember:

- Fat 10g or less per 100g for meals or snacks
- Sugar 10g or less per 100g for cereals, bars and desserts (unless they contain fruit and then it can be higher)
- Sodium or salt 400mg or less per 100g
- Fibre 4g or more per 100g

Other Tips:

Just because foods appear to be healthy, doesn't mean eating them in large quantities is good for you.

If fat, sugar or salt are high, choose to eat them only occasionally.

Consider whether the recommended serving size is the amount you would normally eat.