

Understanding and Using the Nutrition Facts Label for School Nutrition Standards

To figure percent saturated, begin by calculating the number of saturated fat calories. Multiply fat grams (5 in this example) times 9 calories per gram. In this example there are 45 calories from saturated fat. Then divide the saturated fat calories by total calories per serving. This food has 17% saturated fat.

This is to help you figure the percent total fat calories for a food. To calculate, divide the calories from fat by the total calories. This food item has 46% of calories from fat.

To calculate the percent of total weight that is composed of sugar for a food product, use the grams of sugar and total weight in grams per serving on the label. Divide the grams of sugar by serving size weight in grams. Ex: 5 grams ÷ 114 grams = 4.4%.

Foods with little nutritional value (soft drinks, for example) carry a shortened form of this label. Foods in small packages also use a condensed version of this label.

This reminds you that one gram of fat yields 9 calories while one gram of carbohydrate or protein yields only 4 calories.

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size ½ cup (114g)			
Servings Per Container 4			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 260	Calories from Fat 120		
%			
% Daily Value*			
Total Fat 13g	20%		
Saturated Fat 5g	25%		
Cholesterol 30mg	10%		
Sodium 660mg	28%		
Total Carbohydrate 31g	11%		
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%		
Sugars 5g			
Protein 5g			
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 2%		
Calcium 15%	Iron 4%		
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:			
	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g
Calories per gram:			
Fat 9	•	Carbohydrate 4	• Protein 4

Note: The serving size on a “Nutrition Facts” label is standard for food so you can compare different brands of the same food. The above label shows four servings per container. If you eat half the box, double all the numbers and daily values. For example, fat would be 26 grams. “g” means gram – four grams of fat make a teaspoonful. “mg” stands for milligram. 1,000 milligrams = 1 gram. The Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. If you eat more than 2,000 calories daily you can still use the Daily Values shown on labels. Note that cholesterol (300mg) and sodium (2400mg) figures do not change for a higher calorie diet. The fat numbers do increase, but the lower number is a worthy goal even with a 2,500 calorie diet. The Daily Values are:

- Fat: 30% of daily calories
- Saturated Fat: 10% of daily calories
- Carbohydrate: 60% of daily calories
- Protein: 10% of daily calories

