Label Reading

Sample Label

Healthy® Choice Country Vegetable Soup

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size	1 cup (246 g)	
Servings per container	about 2	
Amount per Serving		
Calories	100	
Calories from fat	0	
		% Daily Value**
Total fat	0.5 g	1%
Saturated fat	0 g	0%
Trans fat	0 g	
Cholesterol	0 mg	0%
Sodium	480 mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate	21 g	7%
Dietary Fiber	5 g	20%
Sugars	4 g	
Protein	4 g	

Vitamin A	35%	Vitamin C	4%
Calcium	4%	Iron	10%

**% Daily Value is based on a 2,000 calorie diet.
Your daily values may be higher or lower, depending on your calorie needs.

Percent Daily Value	**Women**	**Men**
Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat less than	65 g	80 g
Saturated fat less than	20 g	25 g
Cholesterol less than	300 mg	300 mg
Sodium less than	2,400 mg	2,400 mg
Total Carbohydrates	300 g	375 g
Dietary fiber	25 g	30 g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9
Carbohydrate 4
Protein 4

Allergen statement: includes gluten information along with milk & nuts. Country of origin (COOL) was added in the fall of 2008.

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TRANS FAT:

Added in 2006, these are in baked products and stick margarine. They increase blood fat and risk for heart disease. Limit these. No % Daily Value.

TOTAL CARBOHYDRATE:

Dietary Fiber: if >5 grams, can subtract half from the Total Carbohydrate.

Sugars: part of the Total Carb content and include natural and added sugars.

Sugar alcohols: (polyols) used as sweeteners in "sugar free" products. They are part of the Total Carbohydrate grams **not** in the "Sugars".

If the serving size of polyols is > 5 grams subtract half the grams of the polyols from the Total Carbohydrate to determine the actual carb grams.

Example:

Total Carb: 38 gm
Polyols: 16 gm
Subtract 1/2: 8 gm

Actual Total Carb: 30 gm

Polyols may be listed by name: Sorbitol, Mannitol, Xylitol or as "Sugar Alcohols". They only need to be listed in the label if the claim "No Sugar Added" is used. FDA requires a statement, "Excess consumption may have a laxative effect" on foods where daily consumption may be 50 gm of sorbitol or 20 gm mannitol.

Net Carbs: Not FDA approved. The food company subtracts ALL the sugar alcohol and fiber from the Total Carb.

References: Warshaw HS, et al. Nutrition Update. *The Diabetes Educator* May/June 1999
Kupper C. Too Much Information? New Labeling Regulations for 2008, Today's *Dietitian*, May 2008
Choose Your Foods: Exchange Lists for Meal planning, Am Dietetic Assoc. 2008

LABELING LAWS: IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE THAT COUNTS

In 2008 the nutrition label was revised. New labeling definitions will be helpful to people with diabetes.

Fat
Information about trans fats was added in 2006. They are found mainly in baked products and margarines. They harden arteries and contribute to heart disease much the same as saturated fat. Limit or avoid these fats. Be careful, some companies have decreased the *trans* fat and increased saturated fat. Limit saturated fat also.

The description of fat grams is helpful, however; the information given as a percentage of your daily needs is misleading. This is based on 2000 calories/day. If your daily need is less than 2000, you need to know how many fat grams per day are allowed to keep your intake at 30% of your calories.

Talk to your dietitian or try doing the math. To figure the fat grams take your total calories and divide by 3. This equals the calories from fat per day. Next divide the fat calories by 9 to get your fat grams per day.

Example
1200 calories/3 =
400 calories from fat
400/9 =
44 grams fat per day

As to saturated fat , this needs to be limited to less than 20 grams per day.

Low:
A product may call itself low if:
low fat:
3 grams or less per serving
low saturated fat:
1 gram or less per serving
low sodium:
less than 140 mg per serving
very low sodium:
less than 35 mg per serving
low calorie:
40 calories per serving

Other terms for ***low*** include ***little, few*** & ***low source of.***

The definition of ***Light or lite*** did not change.
Light or lite means:
1/3 fewer calories
1/2 (50%) the fat
1/2 (50%) sodium
of the reference food

If more than 50% of the calories comes from fat (i.e. sausage), the reduction must be 50% in total fat to use the term ***Light or lite.***

Serving size is given in household measures. Beware, the listed serving size is often less than what you actually eat.

Where's the Sugar?
Figuring the amount of sugar in a product is easier. All sources of sweeteners must be listed together.

The label lists grams of:
Total Carbohydrate
Dietary Fiber
Sugars
Other Carbohydrate

The Sugars listed include both natural (fruit and milk) and added sugar. This may be misleading on a can of fruit packed without sugar. The Total Carb and Sugar grams may be the same even though there is no added sugar - the sugar is natural fruit sugar.

Allergy
Labels will include gluten information along with the nuts and milk information. Country of origin (COOL) was added in the fall of 2008.

Net Carbs
These were NOT defined in the new label. Companies can continue to subtract all the fiber and sugar alcohol from the Total Carb and state Net Carbs.

Being well informed helps. Look for the name, address, and packer/distributor number on the label. Contact them with your questions.

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