

How to Read Nutrition Tables

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Date: Feb. 19, 2024

This How to Read Nutrition Tables reference is designed to help patients understand and interpret nutrition facts labels on food products. It provides a quick reference to key nutritional information, including Daily Values (DV) and Percent Daily Values (%DV), to help patients make informed choices about their diet.

Understanding the Label

| Nutrition Facts | |
|--|----------------------|
| 8 servings per container | |
| Serving size | 2/3 cup (55g) |
| Amount per serving | |
| Calories | 230 |
| % Daily Value* | |
| Total Fat 8g | 10% |
| Saturated Fat 1g | 5% |
| Trans Fat 0g | |
| Cholesterol 0mg | 0% |
| Sodium 160mg | 7% |
| Total Carbohydrate 37g | 13% |
| Dietary Fiber 4g | 14% |
| Total Sugars 12g | |
| Includes 10g Added Sugars | 20% |
| Protein 3g | |
| Vitamin D 2mcg | 10% |
| Calcium 260mg | 20% |
| Iron 8mg | 45% |
| Potassium 240mg | 6% |
| <small>* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small> | |

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *Learn how the new nutrition facts label can help you improve your health.* CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/strategies-guidelines/nutrition-facts-label.html>

Serving Size: Indicates the amount of food considered a single serving (e.g., 1 cup). The DVs and %DVs correspond to this serving size. If you consume double the serving size, you should multiply the values by two.

DV: Shown in grams or milligrams beside each nutrient. It shows the exact amount of a nutrient in a serving size.

%DV: Shows how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to your total daily diet, based on a 2,000-calorie diet recommended by the FDA. It simplifies tracking your nutrient intake without having to subtract the actual amount from the raw DV for that nutrient. For example, if a product has 15% DV for total fat, it means it contributes 15% to your daily recommended fat intake. This is easier than subtracting 8 grams (DV of the serving) from 78 grams (recommended DV of the FDA). If you eat one snack with 13% DV for total fat and then eat a second snack with 12% DV for total fat, you would have consumed 25% of your recommended daily value for total fat.

The %DV column doesn't add up vertically to 100%. It represents the percentage of the DV for each nutrient in one serving of the food.

Nutritional Information (Based on FDA's Recommended DV):

Calories (Recommended DV: 2,000 calories/day): Total energy provided by a serving. Manage your daily intake for weight management.

Total Fat (DV: 78g, %DV: 20% or less): Includes saturated, trans, and unsaturated fats. Aim for a low intake of saturated and trans fats.

Cholesterol (DV: 300mg, %DV: 5% or less): Limit intake to reduce the risk of heart disease.

Sodium (DV: 2,300mg, %DV: 5% or less): Keep intake low to maintain healthy blood pressure. High sodium: 20% DV or more.

Total Carbohydrates (DV: 275g, %DV: varies): Includes sugars, starches, and dietary fiber. Monitor intake for blood sugar management.

Dietary Fiber (DV: 28g, %DV: varies): Aids in digestion and helps lower cholesterol. Aim for high fiber intake.

Sugars: Includes added and natural sugars. Limit added sugars to reduce obesity and diabetes risk.

Protein (DV: varies, %DV: varies): Essential for building and repairing tissues. Include a source in each meal for muscle health.

Vitamins and Minerals (DV and %DV vary): Look for foods high in vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium. Aim for 100% DV for essential nutrients.

Exercise on Reading Nutrition Tables

Step 1: Select a packaged food item from your pantry or grocery store. Write down the name of the product here:

Cheesy Pepperoni Calzone

Step 2: Look at the nutrition label and find the **Serving Size** and **Number of Servings**.

Indicate these below:

Serving Size is the amount typically consumed in one sitting.

1 calzone (128g)

Number of Servings is the number of servings in one package.

4 servings

Step 3: Identify Calories

Step 3: Record the number of calories in one serving:

400 cal

Then, identify the total number of calories in the package by multiplying the number of calories per serving with the number of servings.

1600 cal

Step 4: List the amount per serving of the following nutrients that are recommended to be limited in a healthy diet, and indicate if they are too high or too low.

Total Fat

18g (24% DV)

Saturated Fat

7g (35% DV)

Trans Fat

0.5 g

Cholesterol

35 mg (12% dV)

Sodium

780 mg (33% DV)

Step 5 Record the amount per serving of the following nutrients that are encouraged in a healthy diet, and indicate if they are too high or too low.

Dietary Fiber

2g (8% DV)

Total Sugars

3g

Includes Added Sugars

2g (4% DV)

Protein

12 g

Step 6: List any vitamins and minerals that are highlighted on the label and their percentages based on your recommended daily value:

Calcium, 15% DV

Iron, 10% DV

Step 7: Briefly describe the first five ingredients listed on the label and record their amounts (if indicated)

Ingredients are listed by quantity, from highest to lowest. This gives you insight into the main components of the product.

Ingredient 1:

Wheat Flour - I think this is the main ingredient for the dough. It's probably what makes the calzone have that nice, chewy texture.

Ingredient 2:

Water - I guess they use water to mix with the flour and make the dough. It's pretty standard in most recipes.

Ingredient 3:

Mozzarella Cheese - This is what gives the calzone that gooey, cheesy goodness. I love the stretchy texture it adds.

Ingredient 4:

Pepperoni - It's the spicy meat that adds a lot of flavor. I can see little pieces of it throughout the calzone.

Ingredient 5:

Tomato Paste - I believe this is used for the sauce inside. It has a rich, tomatoey taste that complements the cheese and pepperoni.

Healthcare Professional's Additional Notes and Recommendations

Please provide any observations, potential areas for discussion, or tailored %DVs here.

Patients with dietary restrictions should consider alternative options with lower sodium and saturated fat content. Incorporating more fiber-rich and nutrient-dense foods can help balance the diet.