



HEALTHY EATING WORKSHOP

Reading and Understanding
Food Labels

Agenda

- Overview of basic strategy for healthy eating
- Packaged foods – how do you choose?
 - Back and front of package labeling
 - Government vs. non-government regulated labeling
- Put it into practice
- Wrap up

Objectives

After today's workshop, you will:

1. Know where to find reliable information on food packaging
2. Understand how to verify information on the front of food labels
3. Be able to use information on food packaging to make healthy and informed food choices

Whole Foods

- Nothing added, nothing taken away
 - No **unhealthy fat**, **sugar** or **salt** added
 - No **vitamins**, **minerals** or **fiber** taken away
- Examples:
 - Fresh fruits/vegetables
 - Whole grains
 - Nuts, legumes, eggs

Whole vs. Processed: Fruits, Veggies, Proteins, Grains



Whole Foods
Healthiest



Processed Foods
Least Healthy

Dairy Foods

- Healthiest

**Plain, low-fat
milk and
yogurt**



- Least Healthy



Packaged Foods – How Do You Choose?

What do you look at on a food label to help you make your choice?



Packaged Foods – How Do You Choose?

Back of the package:

- Most reliable
 - Ingredients list
 - Nutrition Facts label

Front of package:

- Lots of information
 - Nutrient content claims
 - Health claims
 - Seals and certifications

Back of Package Labeling

White Beans are a natural source of fiber.

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1/2 cup (127g)
Servings Per Container about 3 1/2

Amount/Serving		% Daily Value*
Calories 110	Calories from Fat 5	
Total Fat 0.5g		1%
Saturated Fat 0g		0%
Trans Fat 0g		
Cholesterol 0mg		0%
Sodium 440mg		18%
Total Carbohydrate 19g		6%
Dietary Fiber 6g		24%
Sugars 1g		
Protein 7g		
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 6%	Iron 8%	

INGREDIENTS: PREPARED NAVY BEANS, WATER, SALT, SUGAR, DEHYDRATED ONION, CALCIUM CHLORIDE

REFRIGERATE ANY UNUSED PORTION IN A SEPARATE, COVERED CONTAINER.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS
Try making White Bean Turkey Chili. This recipe and more available at

Ingredients list

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 100 g

Amount Per Serving		
Calories 250	Calories from fat 10	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 4%		4%
Saturated Fat 1.5%		4%
Trans Fat		
Cholesterol 50mg		28%
Sodium 150mg		15%
Total Carbohydrate 10g		3%
Dietary Fiber 5g		
Sugars 3g		
Protein 16%		
Vitamin A 1%	Vitamin C 3%	
Calcium 2%	Iron 2%	

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Back of the Package: Ingredient List

- Short, simple, readable
- Sound like food
- First ingredient is a healthy one (ingredients are listed from most to least, by weight). **Example:** “whole” should be the first ingredient in 100% whole wheat bread
- No partially hydrogenated oils
- Limited number of sugars:
 - Fructose, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, corn sweetener, sucrose, glucose, dextrose, brown sugar, honey, maple syrup, agave syrup, fruit juice concentrate, cane sugar, invert sugar, evaporated cane juice or molasses.

Ingredient Lists – Test Your Knowledge

Strawberry Flavored Apple Sauce

Ingredients: APPLES,
HIGH FRUCTOSE
CORN SYRUP,
WATER,
STRAWBERRY
PUREE, NATURAL
FLAVORS, ASCORBIC
ACID (VITAMIN C),
RED 40

Natural Apple Sauce

Ingredients:
APPLES, WATER,
ASCORBIC ACID
(VITAMIN C)

Ingredient Lists – Test Your Knowledge

Strawberry Flavored Apple Sauce

Ingredients: APPLES,
HIGH FRUCTOSE
CORN SYRUP,
WATER,
STRAWBERRY
PUREE, NATURAL
FLAVORS, ASCORBIC
ACID (VITAMIN C),
RED 40

Natural Apple Sauce

Ingredients:
APPLES, WATER,
ASCORBIC ACID
(VITAMIN C)



Better
choice!

Back of Package: Nutrition Facts Label

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

Back of Package: Nutrition Facts Label

Check the serving size first

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g) Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

Keep these LOW
< 5%

Keep these HIGH
> 20%

Front of Package – Government- Regulated Nutrient Content Claims

- Examples: “reduced sodium”, “low-fat”, “no added sugar”
- Quickly identify healthier options, e.g. reduced sodium canned foods, low-fat milk, etc.



Front of Package – Government-Regulated Allergens

Food allergy labeling

- Labeling required for foods containing most common food allergens
- Milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, soybeans.
- **Example:** "Contains Wheat, Milk, and Soy."

Gluten-free labeling

- Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, rye, and some cross-breads
- **Approved terms:**
 - "Gluten-free"
 - "Free of gluten"
 - "No gluten"
 - "Without gluten"

Front of Package – Government-Regulated Health Claims

Example:

“Three grams of soluble fiber from oatmeal in a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. This cereal has one gram per serving.”



Front of Package – Government-Regulated Health Claims

Ingredients: Whole grain rolled oats, sugar, flavored fruit pieces (dehydrated apples [treated with sodium sulfite to promote color retention], artificial strawberry flavor, citric acid, red 40), creaming agent (maltodextrin, vegetable oil [soybean and/or palm and/or coconut and/or canola and/or sunflower], whey, sodium caseinate, dipotassium phosphate), oat flour (whole), salt, calcium carbonate (a source of calcium), natural and artificial flavors, guar gum, citric acid, ferric phosphate (a source of iron), vitamin A palmitate, niacinamide, mixed tocopherols, pyridoxine hydrochloride (vitamin B6), riboflavin, thiamine mononitrate, folic acid.



Front of Package – Government-Regulated Health Claims



Ingredients list: Whole grain rolled oats, sugar, flavored fruit pieces (dehydrated apples [treated with sodium sulfite to promote color retention], artificial strawberry flavor, citric acid, red 40), creaming agent (maltodextrin, vegetable oil [soybean and/or palm and/or coconut and/or canola and/or sunflower], whey, sodium caseinate, dipotassium phosphate), oat flour (whole), salt, calcium carbonate (a source of calcium), natural and artificial flavors, guar gum, citric acid, ferric phosphate (a source of iron), vitamin A palmitate, niacinamide, mixed tocopherols, pyridoxine hydrochloride (vitamin B6), riboflavin, thiamine mononitrate, folic acid.

- ✓ First ingredient is whole grain
- ✓ Added vitamins and minerals

- ✗ Second ingredient is sugar
- ✗ Long list
- ✗ Ingredients don't sound like food
- ✗ Lots of artificial flavors and colors
- ✗ Added salt and oils

Front of Package – Not Government-Regulated

Other Claims

- Cereal box #1: Claim- “***4 Simple Ingredients***”

- Hemp seed protein powder: Claim- “**Organic Superfood**”

Front of Package – Not Government-Regulated

Other claims

- Cereal box #1: Claim- “***4 Simple Ingredients***”
 - Ingredients: **Organic whole grain corn, organic dried cane syrup, salt, organic molasses**

- Hemp seed protein powder: Claim- “**Organic Superfood**”
 - The term “**Superfood**” is not a defined by the FDA

Front of Package: Not Government-Regulated

Seals and Certifications

- Value based, e.g. environmental, animal welfare, workers' rights, etc.
- Many certified by non-governmental, third party certifier
- Exception: USDA organic is government certified

Front of Package: Not Government-Regulated

Seals and Certifications

- USDA Organic is government certified
 1. **100% Organic:** 100% organic ingredients
 2. **Organic:** 95% organic ingredients
 3. **Made with Organic Ingredients:** 70% organic ingredients



Front of package: Not Government-Regulated Seals and Certifications

- Value-based - choose what is important to you
- Visit certifier's website to determine procedure for receiving seal

- ***Examples:***



Reading and Understanding Food Labels

- Read ingredient lists and Nutrition Facts labels
 - Choose short list of ingredients
 - Make sure first ingredient is a healthy one
 - Look for low sodium, sugars, saturated and trans fat
 - Use to compare foods within same category
- Don't rely solely on front of package claims. Verify against information on back of package (i.e. ingredient list and Nutrition Facts label)
- Prioritize values and research third party certifiers

Let's Practice: Compare two canned beans options

- Use the Nutrition Facts labels to complete the chart below.
- Which canned beans option is healthier and why?

Canned
Black
Beans

Option
A

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (122.0g)	
Servings Per Container 1	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 130	Calories from Fat 5
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 410mg	17%
Total Carbohydrate 23g	8%
Dietary Fiber 6g	24%
Sugars 1g	
Protein 8g	
Vitamin A 0%	• Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 4%	• Iron 0%

Canned
Black
Beans

Option
B

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (122.0g)	
Servings Per Container 1	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 130	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 135mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 23g	8%
Dietary Fiber 6g	24%
Sugars 1g	
Protein 8g	
Vitamin A 0%	• Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 0%	• Iron 0%

	Serving Size	Calories	Fiber	Protein	Sodium	% DV Sodium
A						
B						

Let's Practice: Compare two canned beans options

- A and B have the same amount of calories, fiber and protein per serving.
- But, option A has over three times more sodium than option B.
- **Option B is the healthier choice and is labeled as low-sodium.**

	Serving Size	Calories	Fiber	Protein	Sodium	% DV Sodium
A	½ cup	130	6 grams	8 grams	410 mg	17%
B	½ cup	130	6 grams	8 grams	135 mg	6%

Resources

Visit [nyc.gov/Health](https://www.nyc.gov/Health)

1. Search for “healthy eating”

- Healthy Eating and Active Living Guide
- Recipes and other handouts (Plate Planners)

2. Search for “farmers markets” to find local produce

- Text “SoGood” to 877877 to find your nearest farmers market
- Onsite education available at select markets

Visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov](https://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov)

Plan for the future

Name one way you will use the information you gained today on your next food shopping trip.

Thanks for Attending!

