

A woman with dark hair, wearing a green jacket, is looking down at a refrigerated display case in a grocery store. The case contains various food items, including what appears to be a carton of eggs and some packaged goods. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the store's interior.

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A L L I A N C E

How To Read Food Labels

**LEARN TOP TIPS AND
TRICKS TO BECOME A
LABEL DETECTIVE**

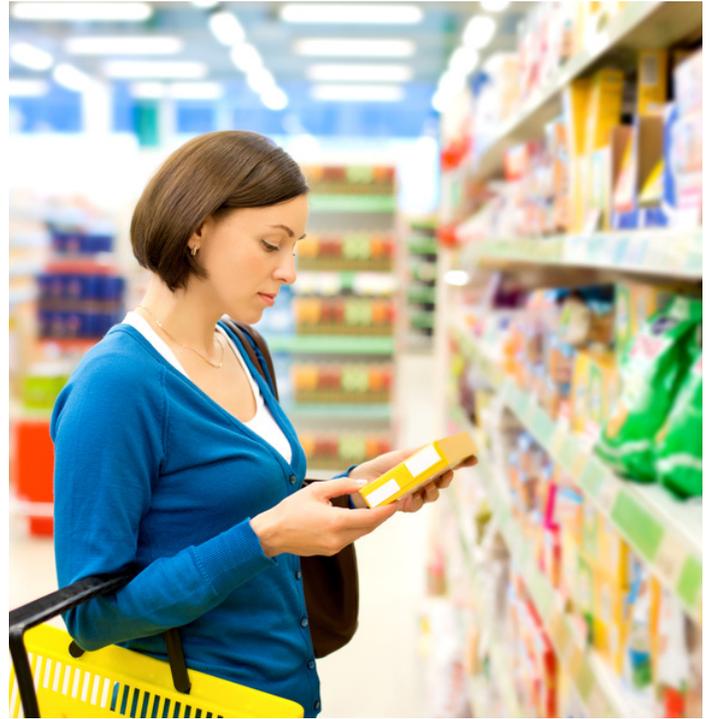
Reading Labels 101

What you need to know

Food labels can be misleading and many food products make health claims to lure you into buying them.

Just because a product is labeled "natural" or "healthy" doesn't mean it is good for you.

Luckily, once you know the right tricks, it's easy to sort out the good from the junk.



Four Simple Tips for Reading Food Labels:

1. Scan the first three ingredients. Ingredients are listed from the highest to the lowest content so the first few listed will make up the bulk of what you are eating.
2. Avoid anything hard to pronounce. If it looks like it belongs in a textbook, it doesn't belong in your body.
3. Stay away from long ingredient lists because that means that the food is ultra processed.
4. Focus on whole, simple foods. They don't need an ingredients list, so there's less guesswork.

Sneaky Names for Sugar

How it is hidden

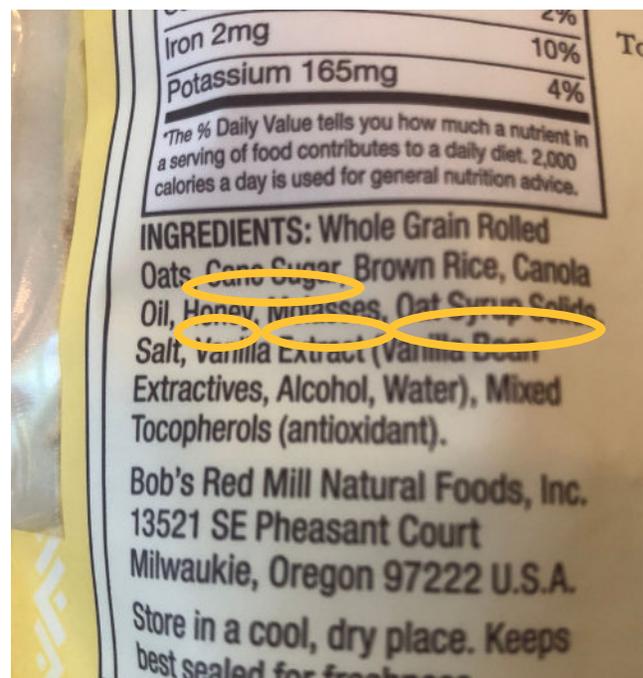
Sugar goes undercover with lots of crafty names. Check out the list below and you'll see what we mean.

The many names of sugar:

- Organic cane sugar
- Evaporated cane juice
- Brown sugar
- Coconut sugar
- Agave nectar
- Brown rice syrup
- Rice bran syrup
- Oat syrup
- Maple syrup
- High fructose corn syrup
- Barley malt (syrup)
- Corn sweetener
- Dextrose
- Fructose
- Glucose
- Galactose
- Maltose
- Ethyl maltol
- Fruit juice concentrate
- Maltodextrin
- Carob sugar
- Beet sugar
- Molasses
- Honey
- Caramel
- Disaccharides

It gets extra confusing when food manufacturers add sugar in different forms so they don't have to list it as the first ingredient.

For example:



Breaking Down Oils

Healthy vs. Unhealthy

Not all oils are created equal. Some are superfoods loaded with antioxidants, vitamins, and omega-3s while others are harmful. Read labels carefully to avoid the unhealthy oils.

Healthy Oils:

For cooking:

- Olive oil (roasting not frying)
- Avocado oil
- Coconut oil
- Ghee

For dressings:

- Olive oil
- Flaxseed oil
- Walnut oil
- Avocado oil

Ultra processed, pro-inflammatory oils are high in Omega-6s, which cause inflammation. Try to stay clear of these.

Unhealthy Oils:

- Canola oil
- Palm oil
- Soybean oil
- Corn oil
- Safflower oil
- Sunflower oil
- Cottonseed oil
- Grapeseed oil
- Vegetable oil
- Corn oil
- Sesame oil
- Peanut oil
- Partially hydrogenated oil (aka trans fat)

Other sneaky ingredients

Watch out for these, too



ADDED FLAVORS

- Monosodium glutamate (MSG)
- Aspartame
- Sucralose
- Saccharin
- Acesulfame potassium
- Yeast extract
- Natural flavors
- Artificial flavors
- Azodicarbonamide (ADA)



PRESERVATIVES

- Nitrates
- Nitrites
- BHA (Butylated hydroxyanisole)
- BHT (Butylated hydroxytoluene)
- Potassium bromate
- Propyl paraben
- Sodium Phosphate



EMULSIFIERS

- Carrageenan
- Maltodextrin
- Polysorbate 80 (PS80)
- Carboxymethylcellulose (CMC)
- Soy lecithin
- Xanthan gum
- Polyglycerols



ADDED COLORS

- All added colors should be avoided (especially Red 3, Red 40, Yellow 5, Yellow 6, Blue 1, Blue 2 and Green 3)
- Titanium dioxide (color additive)
- Caramel color

Shopping for Animal Protein

What you should look for

Organic animal protein is more nutrient dense than conventional meats and more humane. Factory farmed animals are raised in unhealthy living conditions and loaded up on antibiotics so it is important to steer clear of them.

Meat Cheat Sheet:

- Only grass fed as they are fed grass their entire life.
- Fed organic feed with access to the outdoors access (free range).
- No antibiotics and/or growth hormones.
- Pasture raised for chickens is the same as free range, but hens get more space.
- Wild caught: Fish caught from a natural habitat (not raised in tanks).
- No lunch meats, hot dogs and canned meats: These contain carcinogens.



BEEF

Choose grass fed & organic.



POULTRY

Choose organic.



PORK

Choose grass fed & organic.



FISH

Choose wild caught fish.



EGGS

Choose pasture raised or free range organic.



HOT DOGS, LUNCH MEAT CANNED MEAT

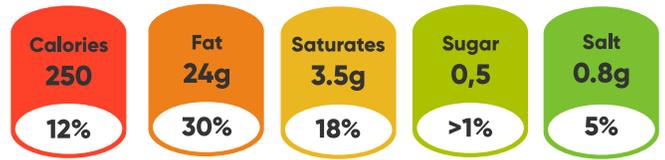
Are group 1 carcinogens that contain nitrates and phosphates. Stay clear!

Understanding Serving Sizes

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 10 oz, Serving Per Container 5	
Amount Per Serving:	
Calories	Calories From Fat
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat	%
Saturated Fat	%
Trans Fat	%
Cholesterol	%
Sodium	%
Total Carbohydrate	%
Dietary Fiber	%
Sugars	%
Protein	

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 10 oz, Serving Per Container 5	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 200	Calories From Fat 200
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 10 g	35%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	11%
Trans Fat 0.0 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	1%
Sodium 210 mg	15%
Total Carbohydrate 15 g	3%
Dietary Fiber 2 g	3%
Sugars 3 g	
Protein 30 g	

*Percent Daily values are based on a 2000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Serving Sizes and Quantities:

- Pay attention to the serving size listed on the label, as all the nutritional information provided is based on that specific serving size.
- Compare the serving size to the amount you typically consume to accurately determine the nutrients you're consuming.
- Check the total servings per container to understand how many servings are in the entire package.

Nutrient Breakdowns:

- Look for the "Nutrition Facts" panel on the food label, which provides important information about the nutrient content.
- Check the total calories per serving to understand the energy content.
- Pay attention to macronutrients such as carbohydrates, fats, and proteins, as well as micronutrients like vitamins and minerals.
- Look for specific nutrients you may want to limit or increase in your diet, such as added sugars, sodium, fiber, or certain vitamins and minerals.



Country of Origin and Food Source:

- Look for the "Country of Origin" label, which indicates where the food was grown, produced, or manufactured.
- If you want to support local or domestic products, check for labels specifying the country or region of origin.
- Consider looking for additional certifications such as organic, non-GMO, fair trade, or sustainably sourced labels, depending on your preferences.



Additional Considerations:

- Consider the overall nutritional quality of the food, including the balance of macronutrients and the presence of essential vitamins and minerals.
- Take note of any allergens or sensitivities indicated on the label, especially if you have specific dietary restrictions.
- If you have specific dietary goals or health concerns, consult with a healthcare professional for personalized guidance.



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Your Health**

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