

Label Reading: How Do I Use a Food Label?

1 Serving Size: A serving size is usually less than most people eat. If you eat two servings, make sure you double the calories and all of the daily values. When comparing foods, make sure the serving sizes are the same.

2 Fat: This lists the total amount of fat in one serving. Try to limit the amount of saturated fat and trans fat you eat.

3 Cholesterol: Try to eat less than 300 mg each day.

4 Sodium: Try to eat less than 2400 mg of sodium (salt) each day.

5 Carbohydrates: These help give you energy. They are found in bread, pasta, potatoes, fruits and vegetables. Good sources of fiber include fruits, vegetables, whole grains and beans. Try to eat 20 to 35 g of fiber per day.

6 Protein: Protein helps build muscle. It is found in meat, nuts, eggs, fish and dry beans. Try to eat lean cuts of meat.

Chicken Noodle Soup

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size ½ cup (120ml) condensed soup	
Servings Per Container about 2.5	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 60	Calories from Fat 15
% Daily Value*	
2 Total Fat 1.5g	2%
Saturated Fat 0.5g	3%
Trans Fat 0g	
3 Cholesterol 15mg	
4 Sodium 890mg	37%
5 Total Carbohydrate 8g	3%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars 1g	
6 Protein 3g	
9 Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	0%
Calcium	0%
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:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
10 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

7 Calories: A calorie is a measure of energy use. Also listed is the number of calories from fat. The general rule is that no more than 30 percent of your calories should come from fat.

8 % Daily Value: This shows how much of the recommended amounts of these nutrients are in one serving (based on a 2,000 calorie diet). These percentages make it easy to compare one brand with another. Just make sure the serving size is the same. The goal is to eat no more than 100 percent of each nutrient each day.

9 Vitamins & Mineral: This shows you how much of the recommended amount of certain vitamins and minerals are in the food. Your goal is to reach 100 percent for each vitamin and mineral every day.

10 Recommended Amounts: Here you can see the recommended daily amount for each nutrient for two calorie levels: a 2,000 calorie and a 2,500 calorie daily diet. Your recommended daily calories may be higher or lower depending on your age, gender and how active you are. However, notice that the recommended amount of sodium and cholesterol is the same no matter how many calories you eat a day.

Source: Adapted from www.fda.gov/Food/IngredientsPackagingLabeling/LabelingNutrition/ucm274593.htm

For weight loss: Look at the following: serving size, calories, fat, fiber and protein.

For wellness: Look at sodium, cholesterol, fat, fiber, sugar, protein and vitamins/minerals.

Your goal: Next time you go grocery shopping, choose two to three varieties of the same item. Compare the labels. Which product will be the best for helping you reach your weight loss goals, wellness goals or both?