

Label Reading

It is important to understand how to read the nutritional information on a food package and the ingredients list. This will enable you to make the best food choices possible when in the supermarket.

Nutrition Information Panel

Example A- Packet Pasta

Nutrition Information		
Serving Size: 1 serve (140g)		
	Average QTY per Serving	Average QTY per 100g
Energy	468 KJ (111 calories)	335 KJ (80 calories)
Protein	17.0 g	12.1 g
Fat - Total	2.7 g	1.9 g
- Saturated	0.3 g	0.2 g
Carbohydrates- Total	4.3 g	3.1 g
- Sugar	3.8 g	2.7 g
Sodium	479 mg	342 mg

If a health claim is made about a product eg 95% fat free, then they must by law provide a nutrition panel as above. Most products these days provide one regardless.

A panel always provides details of the energy (kilojoules or calories), protein, total fat, total carbohydrate (this includes total carbohydrate plus sugar), sugar (this includes only sugar), sodium, potassium, and fibre. Other details that may be provided are cholesterol, other fatty acids, vitamins and minerals.

Choose Products That Are Low In Energy, Fat And Sugar.

When choosing a product the **3 most important things** that you are looking for is that it is low in fat, sugar and energy.

- **Low in Energy (calories or kilojoules)**

Look for products that have the lowest energy (calories, kilojoule) content.

If product XXX has 200 calories and a similar product, product ZZZ has 250calories, then product XXX is the better choice.

- **Low In Fat**

You are aiming for a product to contain less than 10g total fat per 100g of the product (this is less than 10%).

<10g total fat/100g

***Example A* contains 1.9g fat per 100g (1.9% only) so it is very low in fat.**

- **Low In Sugar**

You are aiming for the product to contain less than 10g of sugar (not total carbohydrate) per serving.

<10g sugar/serving of product

***Example A* contains 3.8g sugar per 140g serve so it is low in sugar.**

It is then important to compare similar products and to choose the product containing the least fat, sugar and energy.

High in Fibre

You also want to choose products which are high in fibre. The best way is to compare the fibre per 100g between similar products eg breads or breakfast cereals and choose the product containing the most fibre. Some products will not give you the fibre content as they may contain nil or minimal fibre eg cheese.

It is recommended that people eat between 25-30g of fibre per day.

Low in Salt or Sodium

You want to choose products that contain minimal sodium, particularly if you have a high blood pressure or other cardiovascular problems.

Compare the sodium per 100g between similar products and choose the product with the least sodium.

NOTE When comparing product you need to focus on what nutrients are of concern to you. If you want to lose weight mainly focus on the energy, fat and sugar

Ingredients List

An ingredients list can also give you valuable information on whether a product is suitable or not.

An ingredients list is in order of quantity with the ingredients. The ingredients used in the greatest amount is always first, and the ingredients used in the smallest amount last.

Toasted Crunchy Muesli - Ingredients List

Rolled oats, raw sugar, vegetable oil, coconut, nuts, seeds, wheat germ, dried sultanas, honey, and glucose syrup.

This cereal is high in sugar and fat as raw sugar and vegetable oil appear as the 2nd and 3rd ingredients on the list.

Watch out for disguise words that mean fat & sugar.

Disguise Words for Fat and Sugar

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Fat	Sugar	Salt	Fibre
Beef fat	Fruit concentrates	Baking powder	Bran
Butter	Disaccharides	Stock cubes	Oat bran
Vegetable oil	Raw sugar	Oxo cubes	Wholegrain
Margarine	Brown sugar	Booster	Wholemeal
Coconut	Honey	Celery salt	Rolled oats
Coconut milk	Jam	Rock salt	Resistance starch
Nuts	Corn syrup	Sea salt	Rice bran
Lard	Lactose	Meat/yeast extract	Soy bran
Dripping	Glucose	MSG	Psellism
Milk solids	Fructose	Monosodium	Husks
Copha	Sucrose	Glutamates	Grains
Cream	Mannitol	Onion salt	
Mayonnaise	Honey	Sodium	
Butter fat	Molasses	Sodium bicarb.	
Oil	Treacle	Sodium metabisulphite	
Corn oil	Golden syrup		
Grape seed oil	Invert sugar		
Soy bean oil	Malt		
Sesame oil	Maltose		
Shortening	Sorbitol		
	Xylitol		