

READING NUTRITION LABELS

1. Start with the ingredient list.

The ingredients are listed by weight, from greatest to least. Look for recognizable, whole-food ingredients and be mindful of products with long lists of highly processed ingredients, added sugars, or ingredients you don't recognize. Most packages will have their allergy information in bold lettering at the bottom.

2. Check the serving size.

The nutrition information is based on the stated serving size—not necessarily the amount you actually eat. A package may contain multiple servings for example a single serving of potato chips might only be 3 or 9 chips.

3. Total sugars and added sugars.

Total sugars is the sugar naturally present in the food, added sugars is usually whatever processes sugars they add to sweeten the treat.

4. Get your fiber in its natural state.

Fiber is an important part of a nourishing diet and is naturally abundant in foods like beans, lentils, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds. When comparing packaged foods, a higher-fiber option can often be a more satisfying choice.

5. Don't automatically fear fat.

While some fats are clogging arteries, other fats are acting as a detergent washing away the blockage allowing for better flow of the blood. Rather than simply looking for the lowest-fat product, consider the source and quality of the fat. Whole-food sources such as nuts, seeds, avocado, and olives can be part of a nourishing diet.

6. Pay attention to sodium.

Packaged and convenience foods can contain significant amounts of sodium. Compare similar products and choose lower-sodium options when appropriate.

7. Protein isn't the whole story.

A food being “high protein” doesn't automatically make it nutritious. Look at the whole picture—ingredients, fiber, added sugars, sodium, and how the food fits into your overall diet.

8. Don't let marketing claims make the decision for you.

Words such as natural, healthy, multigrain, wholesome, vegan, gluten-free and so on can be useful, but they don't tell you everything about a product. Turn the package around and read the label.

Don't let one number on the label determine whether a food is “good” or “bad.”

Instead, learn to look at the whole picture.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT #2

Compare and contrast nutrition from something in the produce isle vs. something packaged found in the center isle of your local grocer.

For example the difference between a russet potato vs. hashbrowns in a package. You will find the difference drastic especially in levels of sodium content. This can be some of the haunting truths behind your hyper-tension or anxiety. The more you know the more you can make the changes that align with your health and wellness goals.