

FYI

Reading Food Labels Correctly

Knowing what type of nutrients are present in the processed food that we eat and their exact amount is the key to being a cautious eater. Food labels or nutritional labels make it much easier to compare food and find nutritional values that suit the body. Every person has their unique body requirement - those who are involved in immense physical work obviously have different health criteria than those whose work require a lot of sitting. So, food labels ensure the type we should purchase and consume.

All packaged food have nutrition labels on them. But not all of us know how to read them properly, i.e. we may not understand what the labels actually mean. Many of the terms and the units may be unfamiliar to people. So, we bring this quick guide to check nutrition facts—label reading 101!

First of all, we need to know what we have to look for.

The nutrition information panel contains the following information:

Serving size and number of servings per package-

This section shows how many servings are in the package, and how big the serving is. Serving sizes are given in familiar measurements, such as 'cups' or 'pieces'.

Nutrients within the listed serving size and per 100g:

- Energy (kilojoules/calories)
- Protein
- Total fat and saturated fat
- Total carbohydrate and sugars
- Sodium (salt)
- Fibre (may not always be present)

Warning about the presence of food allergens e.g. nuts, gluten, milk etc.

Nutritional claims- Food labels can display nutrition claims which may be misleading. Below are some common claims and what they mean.

Low Fat: Contains less than 3g fat per 100g.

Diet: The product has been artificially sweetened.

Reduced Fat/Salt: Contains at least 25% less fat or salt than the regular product.

Light OR Lite: May be used to describe texture, colour, flavour. The product does not necessarily contain less fat or sugar.

No Added Sugar: No sugar is added to the product during production. The product could still be naturally high in sugar e.g. fruit juice or dried fruit.

All natural: Generally indicates that no artificial colourings, flavourings or preservatives have been added to the product. It may still be high in fat, sugar and/or salt.

Ingredient List- The ingredients list describes what is in the food. Ingredients are listed in order from the most to the least quantity used in that food.

% Daily Value (%DV)- This shows the amount of nutrients in one serving.

Secondly, you must know that the nutritional information found on a food label is based on just one serving of that particular food. Always look at what makes one serv-

ing (which the food label information is based on) and how many servings are in that package. That is one of the most common mistakes people make when reading food labels. A food label may indicate that a food has 100 calories and only 5 grams of sugar, for example. And the amount of serving of that food is three. That means that if you were to eat the entire package, you would be getting three times the amount shown on the food label, i.e. 300 calories and 15 grams of sugar.

Moving on, you need to know what nutrients you need and what you do not.

Eating too much total fat (especially saturated fat and trans fat), cholesterol, or sodium may increase your risk of certain chronic diseases, such as heart disease, some cancers, or high blood pressure. Try to keep these nutrients as low as possible each day. Dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and potassium- are the nutrients essential for keeping you feeling strong and healthy. Eating enough of these nutrients may improve your health and help reduce the risk of some diseases.

Choose foods with 5% or less DV for saturated fats, trans-fat and sodium, and foods with 15% or more DV for



fibre, vitamins, calcium and iron.

The manufacturers and producers also have a major role in the labels they include on their products. They need to make things clear as much as possible to their customers. For example, when they write sugar, they can mention what sort of sugar they are referring to- corn syrup, glucose, galactose, sucrose, etc. When they write gelatin, they should include the source, whether it was extracted from cow, pig, chicken, etc. because different religions have restrictions on consuming anything taken from certain animals. Moreover when they use words like 'fortified' they should write its meaning in a bracket, because not everyone understands scientific or complex terms. The simpler words used the easier for people to understand what the food contains.

Knowing what you eat is very important. So, from next time you buy your favourite cereal, fruit juice, chips; make sure to have a look at the nutrition label!

By Faiza Khondokar
Photo: Collected

NEWS FLASH

Ujjwala Beauty Expert Contest 2018 (Category 2- Bridal Makeup and Hair Styling)



For the first time ever in Bangladesh, Ujjwala hosted the competition Ujjawala Beauty Expert on 17 September, 2018. It was for beauty experts in the categories of Bridal Makeup and Hairstyling. The core objective of the contest was to showcase the absolute brilliant makeup art of Ujjwala's students nationwide. Of the 40 competitors that were trained for a long time under Afroza Parveen's (Co-Founder and Managing Director of Ujjwala) supervision, 10 were selected for the final round. The judge panel included Naahin Kazi, Razia Sultana, Tanvin Sweetey, Konka Korim and Shahrukh Ameen.

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