

# Reading Nutrition Labels

Take a look at each of these nutrition labels and notice that although they are close in calories, the nutrients present vary drastically!

Boxed Macaroni and Cheese

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size 1 cup (248g)	
Servings Per Container About 2	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 270	Calories from Fat 100
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 7g	<b>35%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 35mg	<b>12%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 610mg	<b>25%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 27g	<b>9%</b>
Dietary Fiber 1g	<b>4%</b>
Sugars 1g	
<b>Protein</b> 12g	
Vitamin A 6%	• Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 20%	• Iron 8%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Code Red Mountain Dew

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size: 1 bottle (20oz)	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 280	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Values*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 0g	<b>0%</b>
Saturated Fat 0g	<b>0%</b>
Polyunsaturated Fat 0g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0g	
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 95mg	<b>4%</b>
<b>Potassium</b> 0mg	
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 74g	<b>25%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	<b>0%</b>
Sugars 73g	
Other Carbohydrate 0g	
<b>Protein</b> 0g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 0%	Iron 0%

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

Chopped Salad with Chicken

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size: 1/2 container (152g)	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 250	Calories from Fat 130
% Daily Values*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 16g	<b>25%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	<b>15%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 35mg	<b>12%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 290mg	<b>12%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 18g	<b>6%</b>
Dietary Fiber 2g	<b>8%</b>
Sugars 8g	
<b>Protein</b> 9g	
Vitamin A 30%	Vitamin C 100%
Calcium 6%	Iron 4%

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

Remember that there is no such thing as a good food or a bad food, all foods have desirable and undesirable aspects. Instead, choose foods with care and think about the food as a whole and how it fits into your overall diet.

# Interpreting a Nutrition Label

**Daily Value Percentages** are a tool for YOU! Your goal is to reach 100% of each nutrient throughout each day (values can change slightly based on individuals so do not worry if you are slightly over or under on a specific day). Use these to understand the foods you are eating. Less than 5% is considered low and more than 20% is considered high.

## Get enough of these

**Protein is not typically a concern** in the American diet, **we often consume too much**, so unless you have dietary restrictions such as a vegetarian, you do not need to go out of your way for excess protein. The average person need 46-56g/day but actual recommendations change based on individuals.

Most **vitamins** are found in adequate amounts in the American diet. Some that may be limiting are Iron, Calcium, and Vitamin D. Choose foods that include these vitamins but speak to a healthcare professional (such as a registered dietitian) if you are worried about certain vitamins or minerals before supplementation or excessive intake.

**Fiber** is great for our bodies as it helps with digestion amongst other things and we often **DO NOT** get enough. There are lots of health benefits to eating the correct amount of fiber! Good sources include nuts, seeds, fruits, and vegetables

**Carbs are ENERGY** so there is no reason to limit them below the dietary guideline. They are only bad when you eat in excess.

## Limit These when Possible

**Calories** are important and should be based on a 2,000 cal/day diet (this number varies for individual people). **MAKE SURE YOU LOOK AT SERVING SIZE** for the actual number of calories you are eating.

**Total fat is not always bad**, you should limit saturated and trans fats because they are linked to chronic diseases such as heart disease but mono- and poly- unsaturated fats are **GOOD** and you should eat them!

**Limit sodium** found in salty or prepackaged foods.

**Limit sugars and added sugars** to limit your risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND A LITTLE BIT OF ADDED SUGAR WILL NOT HURT YOU**, these conditions occur over long periods of time with excessive consumption