

Fat & Sugar

These are two nutrients you should limit. When choosing meats & dairy opt for leaner cuts of meat & reduced-fat dairy products. Avoid *trans* fat and limit the amount of saturated fats in your diet. Saturated fats are the fats that are solids at room temperature & Unsaturated fats will remain in their liquid form. Sugars occur naturally in fruits & fruit juices, but don't overdo it on the fruits either. Any stored sugar that is not burned is converted to fat.

Fiber

Make sure you are getting enough fiber in your diet. Grains are divided into 2 subgroups, whole grains and refined grains. Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel -- the bran, germ, and endosperm. Refined grains have been milled, a process that removes the bran and germ. This is done to give grains a finer texture and improve their shelf life, but it also removes dietary fiber, iron, and many B vitamins.

Sodium

Most recommend between 1,500 and 2,400 milligrams (mg) a day for healthy adults. A lower sodium intake has a more beneficial effect on blood pressure. Individuals 50 yrs. And older should consult with their doctor on the recommended amount of sodium for their diets.

The average U.S. diet has three main sources of sodium.

- ✓ **Processed and prepared foods.** Ex. canned vegetables, soups, luncheon meats and frozen foods.
- ✓ **Sodium-containing condiments.** One teaspoon of table salt has 2,325 mg of sodium, and 1 tablespoon of soy sauce has 1,005 mg of sodium.
- ✓ **Natural sources of sodium.** Sodium naturally occurs in some foods, such as meat, poultry, dairy products and vegetables. For example, 1 cup of low-fat milk has about 110 mg of sodium.

Healthy Cooking

30 Minutes or Less

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How to Read a Nutrition Facts Label

Sample label for
Macaroni & Cheese

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	2,000	2,500
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

Quick Guide to % DV

- 5% or less is Low
- 20% or more is High

1 **Start Here** →

2 **Check Calories**

3 **Limit these Nutrients**

4 **Get Enough of these Nutrients**

5 **Footnote**

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#1 Serving Size

The first place to start when you look at the Nutrition Facts label is the serving size and the number of servings in the package. **Pay attention to the serving size, especially how many servings there are in the food package. Then ask yourself, "How many servings am I consuming"?**

#2 Calories & Calories from Fat

Calories provide a measure of how much energy you get from a serving of this food. Many Americans consume more calories than they need. The calorie section of the label can help you manage your weight (i.e., gain, lose, or maintain.) **Remember: the number of servings you consume determines the number of calories you actually eat (your portion amount).**

#3 & 4 Nutrients

The nutrients listed first are the ones Americans generally eat in adequate amounts, or even too much. **Limit these Nutrients.** Eating too much fat, saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, or sodium may increase your risk of certain chronic diseases, like heart disease, some cancers, or high blood pressure.

Most Americans don't get enough dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron in their diets. **Get Enough of these Nutrients.** A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and grain products that contain dietary fiber, particularly soluble fiber, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease.

#5 Daily Values

This information found here doesn't change from product to product, it is just showing you how much of each nutrient you should be getting based on 2,000 or 2,500 calorie/day diet.

#6 The Percent Daily Value

The % Daily Values (%DVs) are based on the Daily Value recommendations for key nutrients but only for a 2,000 calorie daily diet--not 2,500 calories. You, like most people, may not know how many calories you consume in a day. But you can still use the %DV as a frame of reference whether or not you consume more or less than 2,000 calories

The %DV helps you determine if a serving of food is high or low in a nutrient. Note: a few nutrients, like *trans* fat, do not have a %DV—these are usually nutrients you should not be eating or limit the amounts you are eating

How much is too much????

The amount of calories, fat, sugar, fiber, & sodium that you should be consuming will depend largely on your age, your activity level, and any pre-existing health conditions. It is best to check with your doctor to know your specific limits. However, the FDA does provide some general guidelines for us to follow.

Calories

It is impossible to suggest an amount of calories for any individual without knowing their age, sex, current weight & height, and most importantly activity level. There are several reliable websites that offer pre-made calculators for you to plug in your information and will provide you with a suggestion→I recommend checking with your doctor.

If you are trying to lose weight keep in mind that you must burn an **additional** 3,500 calories to lose 1 pound.

To lose 1 lb. in a week, you need to burn 500 calories each day in addition to the amount you already use. The best & most successful way is to combine your diet & exercise. By cutting portion size & choosing healthier options you could cut back 250 calories, and exercise for the additional 250 calories left to burn.