

# READING FOOD LABELS

Good nutrition is key to maintaining health and staying alert and focused on the job. Food labels can help us choose healthier options.

### DAN'S STORY

Dan, a floor-layer, packs his own lunch every day. He is trying to lose some weight by watching what he eats. Despite doing this for several weeks, Dan hasn't lost any weight. Although he looks at the calories, Dan realizes that he has been ignoring all of the other information on the label! In this activity, we will learn how to read a food label, which can help us make better choices about food and portion size.

### SERVING SIZE

- A serving is the amount of food or drink described by the nutrition facts label.
- Serving size is often mistaken for portion size. However, the two are different. A portion is the amount of food we choose to eat. We may have a portion of food that is multiple servings of the food or drink.

### CALORIES

- Calories are the measure of how much energy you get from each serving of food or drink.
- The number of calories you need to eat each day depends on your age, gender, height, weight, and physical activity.

### PERCENT DAILY VALUE: THE 20/5 RULE

- The 20/5 rule can help us determine if the food is right for us.
- Fiber, potassium, vitamin A and C, iron, and calcium should be 20% or more of our daily requirements.
- Fat, saturated fat, sodium, and sugar should be kept below 5%.

Sample label for Macaroni & Cheese

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g) Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g	<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
<b>Protein</b> 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.

	Calories: 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

1 **Start Here** →

2 **Check Calories**

3 **Limit these Nutrients**

4 **Get Enough of these Nutrients**

5 **Footnote**

6 **Quick Guide to % DV**

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

MANY STORES HAVE NUTRITION INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE.  
CHECK THEIR WEBSITE FOR NUTRITION INFORMATION.



# LET'S PRACTICE

BELOW IS THE LABEL FOR FOOD ITEMS AVAILABLE AT A LOCAL CONVENIENCE STORE.

FOR EACH OF THE ITEMS:

1. What is the serving size?
2. How many calories are in each serving?
3. How many servings of this food would you eat in one sitting? How many calories are you really eating?
4. Are these food items meeting the 20/5 rule? If not, what else should Dan be eating?
5. What are other items that Dan could get at the convenience store to meet his goal of losing weight?

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
18 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>1/6 pizza (140g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>330</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>15%</b>
Saturated Fat 5g	<b>25%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 700mg	<b>30%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 42g	<b>15%</b>
Dietary Fiber 2g	<b>7%</b>
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 3g Added Sugars	<b>6%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 13g	
Vitamin D 1.0mcg	4%
Calcium 183mg	15%
Iron 3.0mg	15%
Potassium 272mg	6%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Pepperoni Pizza

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
4 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>1 open-faced sandwich(137g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>15%</b>
Saturated Fat 7g	<b>35%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 300mg	<b>13%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 25g	<b>9%</b>
Dietary Fiber 1g	<b>4%</b>
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	<b>0%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 6g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 209mg	15%
Iron 2mg	10%
Potassium 127mg	2%

\*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Grilled Cheese Sandwich