

17 READING LABELS

PURPOSE

This activity reinforces concepts learned in “Healthy Eating Plate” and “Macronutrients Family Feud.” Information in this activity promotes understanding of basic nutrition concepts. Good nutrition is a key component in maintaining health and staying alert and focused on the job.

ACTIVITY TIME

Approximately 15 minutes

PREPARATION

- Everyone needs a piece of paper, pencil, and access to the internet for this activity.
- Print PUSH Cards.

DIRECTIONS

Supervisor reads out loud

Supervisor reads out loud

SUPERVISOR READS QUESTION

- ✘ *Do not read out loud*



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ACTIVITY

At the top of a piece of scrap paper, everyone write down one of their favorite foods that comes in a package. It doesn't have to be healthy, just something you like to eat and enjoy from time to time.

We want everyone to have a different food, so we'll go around the room and tell each other what we picked in 30 seconds.

✘ *Go around the room and ask staff what they picked.*

Okay, good. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about the food you wrote down. It's okay if you don't know, just write down what your best guess is.

Think of the type of packaging that contains your chosen food. For example, if you wrote down Rice Crispy Cereal, you would buy it in a box.

Again, if you don't know the answer to the question, write your best guess. Ready for the questions? Here we go:

1. **WHAT IS A SERVING SIZE OF THIS FOOD?**
2. **HOW MANY CALORIES ARE IN A SERVING SIZE?**
3. **HOW MANY GRAMS OF FAT ARE IN A SERVING SIZE?**
4. **HOW MANY GRAMS OF PROTEIN ARE IN A SERVING SIZE?**
5. **HOW MANY GRAMS OF CARBOHYDRATES ARE IN A SERVING OF THIS ITEM?**
6. **HOW MANY GRAMS OF SUGAR ARE IN A SERVING OF THIS ITEM?**
7. **WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE 6TH INGREDIENT IN THE FOOD ITEM?**

✘ *Confirm everyone has recorded their best guesses.*

Okay, now we're going to check our answers! Hop onto the Internet and Google the item of food and "nutrition label." So for my example, I would search "Rice Crispy Cereal Nutrition Label."

If the answer is correct, give it a check. If it is incorrect, give it an "X" and write down the correct answer.

✘ *Take some time to walk around and help people/check out the progress. Wrap it up after a few minutes.*

Let's talk about what you found out.

FIRST OF ALL, CAN ANYONE TELL ME THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SERVING SIZE AND A PORTION SIZE?

Answer: A serving is the amount of food or drink listed on the nutrition facts label. A portion is the amount of food we choose to eat. You may have a portion of food that is multiple servings of the food or drink.

HOW MANY DID YOU GET RIGHT?

DO YOU USUALLY EAT MORE THAN A SERVING SIZE WHEN YOU EAT THIS FOOD?

OKAY, WHAT ABOUT CALORIES? DID ANYONE GUESS THE RIGHT NUMBER OF CALORIES?

The number of calories you need to eat each day depends on your age, gender, height, weight and physical activity. It's important to get enough calories in your diet to fuel your body. However, eating too many calories causes weight gain. Knowing the calories you need and checking nutrition labels for surprise calorie bombs can help you stay in control of your weight.

We want to get a pretty good balance of macronutrients (fat, protein, and carbohydrates) in our diets. Using the nutrition label to figure out the amount of macronutrients in our foods can help make sure that we are getting what our body needs.

DOES ANYONE HAVE A FOOD THAT HAS ALL THREE MACRONUTRIENTS?

WHO IN THE ROOM HAS THE HIGHEST SUGAR CONTENT PER SERVING IN THEIR FOOD?

Sugar is fine in small doses, but a typical American diet has too much! Sugar is full of "empty calories,"

which means it doesn't have valuable nutrients. Men should get less than 38 grams of sugar per day and women should get less than 25 grams of sugar per day. We'll learn more about sugar in another activity.

WERE YOU GUYS ABLE TO FIND OUT WHAT THE SIXTH INGREDIENT OF YOUR FOOD WAS?

Okay, we're going to go around the room and take your best shot at trying to pronounce them.

✘ *Let staff answer.*

Wow, some of you had things I have never heard of. If you're in the store, take a quick look at the back of the package. If the ingredients list is particularly long and the ingredients listed at the beginning are unrecognizable or weird, you should put the item back on the shelf and move on. A great rule of thumb is, the easier the ingredients are to pronounce, and the shorter the list is, the better it is for your body.

The point of this activity is to illustrate the role nutrition labels can play in helping us choose healthy diets. Next time you are at the store making choices, use the label to help you pick healthier foods!

PUSH FORWARD

✘ *Pass out PUSH cards.*

On your card is a link to the Promoting U through Safety and Health page (www.promotingusafetyhealth.com). If you follow this page you can learn about other ways to stay safe at home and at work.