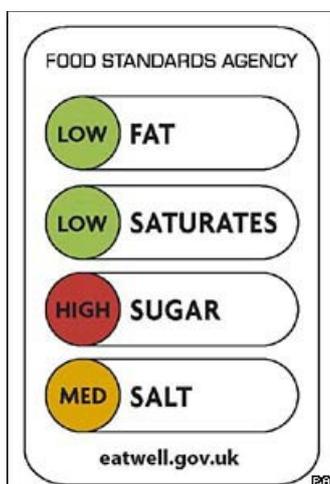


Understanding Food Labels

This dietary advice sheet gives some general information. If you need more detailed advice or if you are following a special diet that makes it difficult to use this information, please ask your doctor to refer you to a registered dietitian.

Nutrition Information on labels may be shown in a traffic light system. This shows if a food has high (red), medium (amber) or low (green) amounts of calories, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt per 100g and per serving of food.



Another system shows the percentage of the Guideline Daily Amount (GDA) per serving for each of these items.



Guideline Daily Amounts are based on official government figures for average adults. The calorie and fat levels are for adults of a healthy weight. If you are trying to lose weight, aim for fewer calories and less fat.

Guideline Daily Amount (per day)		
	Women	Men
Calories	2000	2500
Fat	70g	95g
Salt	5g	7g

What does the Nutrition Information mean?

Nutritional Information		
Typical Values (cooked as per instructions)		
	Per Serving	Per 100g
Energy	1462 kJ	975kJ
	351 kcal	234 kcal
Protein	9.0g	6.0g
Carbohydrate	28.2g	18.8g
of which sugars	3.0g	2.0g
of which starch	25.2g	16.8g
Fat	22.3g	14.0g
of which saturates	7.6g	5.1g
of which monounsaturates	10.9g	7.3g
of which polyunsaturates	2.7g	1.8g
Fibre	1.6g	1.1g
Sodium	0.6g	0.4g
Per Serving	351 kcal	22.3 g fat

Energy

This is the number of calories (kcal) in the food. Kilojoules (kJ) is the metric version.

Calories come from protein, carbohydrate, fat and alcohol.

Eating more calories than your body needs will lead to weight gain.

Carbohydrate

This is the total amount of sugars and starch in a food.

The total figure is often followed by a separate figure for sugars and sometimes for starch content.

The figure for sugars will include:

- those that occur naturally in food, such as fruit sugar (fructose) and milk sugar (lactose)
- sugars added in processing, such as table sugar (sucrose), lactose, fructose, dextrose and maltose.

5g sugar = 1 teaspoon sugar = 20 calories

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Fat

This is the total amount of fat the food contains. The higher the total fat, the higher the calories.

or more
5g saturated fat
or more 3g fat or less
1g saturated fat

The label may also provide information about the type of fat.

There are 3 main types listed: saturates, polyunsaturates and monounsaturates. Saturated is the type of fat associated with an increased risk of heart disease and other circulation problems.

Low-fat biscuits, cakes and desserts are often high in sugar. Check for this if you are trying to eat fewer calories.

Fibre

This is important in preventing constipation. Aim for about 24g of fibre each day.



Sodium (Salt)

Sodium is the part of salt that can affect blood pressure.

Food labels often list both sodium and salt content, which can be confusing.

To convert sodium to salt, multiply by 2.5
To convert salt to sodium, divide by 2.5

For example:	0.8g sodium = 2g salt
	1g salt = 0.4g sodium

Many manufactured foods are highly salted. Look for foods with under 0.3g sodium per 100g, that's 0.75g salt per 100g.

Check the serving size. A 400g ready meal with 0.3g sodium per 100g would provide 1.2g sodium, or 3g of salt per serving. That's about half the recommended daily guideline amount.

Health Claims: What Do They Mean?

- **Low fat**
This means the food contains less than 3g fat per 100g/100ml of the food.
- **Reduced fat**
This means the food must contain 25% less fat than a similar standard product. It does not mean the product is 'low fat'.
- **Less than 5% fat (or 95% fat free)**
This means the food contains less than 5g fat per 100g.

For example if you bought a ready meal which had this claim and the serving size was 400g then the whole meal would contain, at the most, 20g fat.

Use these claims as a guide and always check the nutrition panel for the total amount of fat in a serving and compare this with the guideline daily amount.
- **% less fat than the standard product**
This shows the fat reduction made to a product compared with a standard named product. For example, 20% less fat than a comparable product.

This can help you choose lower fat foods. However, always check to see how much fat the product contributes to your guideline daily amount – it may still be high fat.
- **No added sugar**
This means that no sugars from any source have been added. May still contain a lot of natural sugar and therefore calories, for example fruit sugar in fruit juice.
- **Reduced sugar**
A product must contain 25% less sugar than the regular product.
- **Low sugar**
This means that the product contains no more than 5g of sugar per 100g/100ml. For yoghurt, low sugar means less than 10g total carbohydrate per 100g/100ml