

Key Nutrients and Your Health

The **Nutrition Facts** label found on packaged foods and beverages can help you **monitor nutrients you want to get more of and those you want to get less of**, which can help you reduce your risk of developing some health conditions.

1 **Nutrients to get more of: dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium.** Many Americans do not get the recommended amount of these nutrients. More often, choose foods and beverages that are higher in these nutrients—that is, with 20% or more of the Daily Value per serving.

2 **Nutrients to get less of: saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars.** Most Americans exceed the recommended limits for these nutrients. More often, choose foods and beverages that are lower in these nutrients—that is, with 5% or less of the Daily Value per serving.

3 **% Daily Value (%DV) shows how much of a nutrient in a serving of the food contributes to a total daily diet.** The %DV is the **percentage of the Daily Value** (reference amounts of nutrients to consume or not to exceed each day) for each nutrient in a serving of the food. Use the %DV to determine if a serving of the food is high or low in an individual nutrient and to compare food products (make sure the serving size is the same).

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	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.

As a general guide:

- **5% DV** or less of a nutrient per serving is considered **low**
- **20% DV** or more of a nutrient per serving is considered **high**



Nutrients to Get **More** Of

Dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium

Dietary Fiber

Dietary fiber is a type of carbohydrate that cannot be easily digested. Dietary fiber can speed up the movement of food and waste through the digestive system and can make you feel full, which may lower your calorie intake by helping you eat less and yet stay satisfied longer. Dietary fiber can also help lower low-density lipoprotein (LDL or “bad”) cholesterol levels in the blood and can help control the level of blood glucose (often referred to as blood sugar) by preventing rapid rises in blood glucose following a meal.

Diets higher in dietary fiber can **increase the frequency of bowel movements and can reduce the risk of developing cardiovascular disease.**

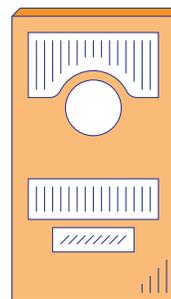
Food sources include:

- Whole grains (such as whole oats, brown rice, bulgur, popcorn, and quinoa) and foods made with whole grain ingredients (such as some breads, cereals, crackers, and pasta)
- Beans, peas, and lentils
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Fruits
- Vegetables

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Consume a variety of foods that are good sources of dietary fiber and consume at least half of your grain choices as whole grains. The **Daily Value for dietary fiber is 28 grams (g) per day** (based on a 2,000 calorie daily diet).



Vitamin D

Vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium and is important for optimal bone health. It is also important for many body processes, such as blood pressure regulation, hormone production, and immune and nervous system function. Vitamin D is found in many foods and is also produced by the body when your skin is exposed to sunlight.

Diets higher in vitamin D can **reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis** (weak and brittle bones) that can result in bone fractures.

Food sources include:

- Fish (such as flounder, herring, salmon, trout, and tuna)
- Fish oil and cod liver oil
- Fortified dairy products (such as milk and yogurt)
- Fortified ready-to-eat cereals
- Fortified orange juice
- Fortified soy beverages
- Mushrooms

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Consume a variety of foods that are good sources of vitamin D. The **Daily Value for vitamin D is 20 micrograms (mcg) per day.**

Calcium

Calcium is a mineral and is important for optimal bone health. It is also important for many body processes, such as blood clotting, hormone secretion, muscle contraction, and nervous system function.

Diets higher in calcium can **reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis** (weak and brittle bones) that can result in bone fractures.

Food sources include:

- Fortified ready-to-eat cereals
- Dairy products (such as cheese, milk, and yogurt)
- Fortified soy beverages
- Tofu (made with calcium sulfate)
- Fortified orange juice
- Canned seafood with bones (such as salmon and sardines)
- Green vegetables (such as kale, broccoli, and collard greens)

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Consume a variety of foods that are good sources of calcium. The **Daily Value for calcium is 1,300 milligrams (mg) per day.**

Iron

Iron is a mineral and is important for red blood cell formation. It is also important for many body processes, such as growth and development, immune function, reproduction, and wound healing.

Diets adequate in iron can **reduce the risk of developing anemia** (a deficiency of red blood cells or of hemoglobin in the blood that can result in fatigue and weakness).

Food sources include:

- Organ meats (such as liver)
- Meat
- Poultry
- Whole grain, enriched, and fortified breads, cereals, pasta, and rice
- Green vegetables (such as asparagus, beet greens, broccoli, spinach, and swiss chard)
- Seafood (such as crab, clams, sardines, shrimp, and oysters)
- Soy products (such as tofu)
- Beans, peas, and lentils
- Eggs
- Seeds
- Nuts
- Fruits (such as raisins and cantaloupe)

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Consume a variety of foods that are good sources of iron. Iron is especially important for young children, adolescent girls, and individuals who are pregnant. The **Daily Value for iron is 18 milligrams (mg) per day.**

Potassium

Potassium is a mineral and is important for many body processes, such as heart function, muscle contraction, nervous system function, and fluid balance.

Food sources include:

- Vegetables (such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, beet greens, and spinach)
- Juices (such as orange, pomegranate, prune, carrot and other vegetable juices)
- Tomato products (such as juice, paste, puree, and sauce)
- Beans
- Dairy products (such as milk and yogurt)
- Seafood (such as clams, pollock, and trout)
- Fruits (such as apricots, bananas, kiwifruit, cantaloupe, and grapefruit)

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Consume a variety of foods that are good sources of potassium. The **Daily Value for potassium is 4,700 milligrams (mg) per day.**

Nutrients to Get **Less** Of

Saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars

Saturated Fat

Saturated fat is found in higher proportions in animal products and is usually solid at room temperature.

There is evidence that diets in which unsaturated fats (especially polyunsaturated fats) are eaten in place of saturated fat and within the recommended daily limits for calories are associated with reduced blood levels of total cholesterol and low-density lipoprotein (LDL or “bad”) cholesterol—which, in turn, are associated with a **reduced risk of developing cardiovascular disease**.

Food sources include:

- Sandwiches (such as burgers, burritos, deli sandwiches, hot dogs, and tacos)
- Baked goods (such as brownies, cakes, cookies, doughnuts, pastries, and pies)
- Desserts (such as ice cream, other frozen desserts, and puddings)
- Snack foods (such as chips, crackers, microwave popcorn, and pretzels)
- Sweets (such as chocolate candies)
- Meats and poultry
- Processed meats and poultry products (such as bacon, hot dogs, jerky, some luncheon meats, and sausages)
- Dairy products (such as whole and 2% reduced-fat milk, cheese, and yogurt)
- Condiments, gravies, salad dressings
- Spreads (such as butter, stick margarine, cream cheese, and sour cream)
- Pizza
- Beef fat (tallow and suet), chicken fat, pork fat (lard), and vegetable shortening
- Tropical plant oils (such as coconut, palm, and palm kernel oils)

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Individuals 2 years of age and older should limit calories from saturated fat to less than 10% of total calories per day by replacing saturated fat with unsaturated fats, particularly polyunsaturated fats. The **Daily Value for saturated fat is less than 20 grams (g) per day** (based on a 2,000 calorie daily diet).

Monounsaturated and Polyunsaturated Fats

- Monounsaturated fat and polyunsaturated fat are not mandatory on the Nutrition Facts label.
- Food sources include vegetable oils (such as corn, olive, and sunflower oils), avocados, nuts, seeds, fish (such as salmon, trout, and tuna), mayonnaise and oil-based salad dressings, and soft margarine (liquid, spray, and tub).

Sodium

Sodium is a mineral and is one of the chemical elements found in table salt. Sodium is an essential nutrient that the human body needs in relatively small amounts and is important for many body processes, such as fluid balance, muscle contraction, and nervous system function.

Diets higher in sodium are associated with an increased **risk of developing high blood pressure.**

Food sources include:

- Deli meat sandwiches
- Pizza
- Burritos and tacos
- Soups
- Savory snacks (e.g., chips, crackers, popcorn)
- Poultry
- Pasta mixed dishes
- Burgers
- Egg dishes and omelets

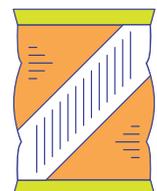
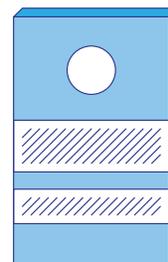
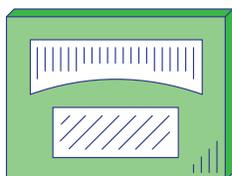
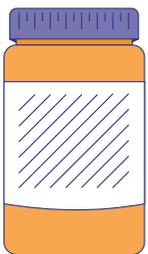
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Adults and children 14 years and older should limit sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) per day—that's equal to about 1 teaspoon of table salt. The **Daily Value for sodium is less than 2,300 mg per day.** For children under age 14, recommended limits are even lower.

Understanding Cardiovascular Disease and Hypertension

- **Cardiovascular disease** is a group of diseases affecting the heart and blood vessels (arteries, capillaries, and veins), which can lead to chest pain (angina), heart attack, and stroke. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in both men and women in the U.S.
- **Hypertension** (also known as high blood pressure) is a condition in which blood pressure remains elevated over time. Hypertension makes the heart work too hard, and the high force of the blood flow can harm arteries and organs, such as the heart, brain, kidneys, and eyes. Uncontrolled hypertension can lead to heart attack, heart failure, stroke, kidney disease, and blindness.



Added Sugars

Added sugars include sugars that are added during the processing of foods (such as sucrose or dextrose), foods packaged as sweeteners (such as table sugar), sugars from syrups and honey, and sugars from concentrated fruit or vegetable juices. When sugars are added to foods and beverages (such as candy, desserts, sugar-sweetened beverages, and sweet snacks), it increases calories without contributing important nutrients. These extra calories can make it harder for people to meet their daily recommended levels of nutrients and stay within calorie limits.

There is evidence that diets characterized, in part, by lower consumption of sugar-sweetened foods and beverages relative to less healthy dietary patterns are associated with a **reduced risk of developing cardiovascular disease**. Diets higher in all sugars can also **increase the risk of developing cavities**.

Food sources include:

- Sugar-sweetened beverages (such as energy drinks, fruit drinks, regular soda, sports drinks, sweetened waters, and sweetened coffee and tea)
- Baked goods (such as cakes, cookies, pastries, and pies)
- Desserts (such as ice cream, other frozen desserts, and puddings)
- Sweetened breakfast cereal
- Sweets (such as candies, jams, sweet toppings, and syrups)
- Salad dressings, sauces, spreads, condiments, and gravies
- Single-ingredient sugars (such as table sugar, maple syrup, or honey)

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Limit calories from added sugars to less than 10% of total calories per day. The **Daily Value for added sugars is less than 50 grams (g) per day** (based on a 2,000 calorie daily diet).