

AICR's Tips on How to Read the Nutrition Facts Label for Cancer Prevention

- 1 Check the serving size**
This is not always the whole package.
- 2 Check the calories**
Too many calories can lead to weight gain. There is strong evidence that having overweight or obesity is a cause of many cancers.
- 3 Limit these**
Watch out for food with more than 20% DV for sodium and added sugars. The higher these numbers, the more processed the food.

Highly processed foods also often contain added fats (e.g., chips, cookies, doughnuts or biscuits). Eat these only occasionally and in small amounts. However, plant foods such as nuts and avocados are naturally high in healthy fats, are minimally processed if at all and are part of a healthy diet.
- 4 Get enough of these**
Look for food that has at least 3g of fiber. Eat plant-based proteins such as soy beans, peas and lentils. Get your vitamins from food instead of supplements.
- 5 You can use Percent Daily Values or %DV's to help evaluate a particular food item.**
Daily Values are recommended nutrient goals or limits for a person eating 2,000 calories per day. You may need more or less than 2,000 calories per day. Choose foods with 5% or less saturated fat, sodium and added sugars. Choose foods with 20% or more vitamins, minerals and fiber.

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%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 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.

An estimated 40% of all cancer cases can be prevented. Eating a healthy diet, being more active and maintaining a healthy weight are, after not smoking, the most important ways to reduce cancer risk.

Serving Size & Servings per Container

This is the first thing to check. **Servings size is the amount of food most people typically eat at one time.** All of the nutrition information listed on the label applies to one serving. Compare the amount of the food you typically eat to the serving size listed. If the serving size is ½ cup, but you typically eat 1 cup, then you will be getting twice the number of calories, fat and other nutrients listed on the label. The servings per container is the total number of serving sizes in the whole package.

Dietary Fiber

This is key to look at for cancer prevention. **Aim for foods high in fiber.** AICR recommends a diet that provides at least 30g of fiber from food sources. There is strong evidence that consuming dietary fiber helps protect against colorectal cancer and weight gain, overweight and obesity.

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Calories

It is important to look at the calories. This section shows the number of calories in one serving. You can compare this to 2,000 calories, which is an average of what most American adults need. However, it is important to note that this differs for everyone and may be lower or higher. If you are trying to lose weight to lower your cancer risk you may want to consume fewer calories. There is strong evidence that having overweight or obesity is a cause of many cancers.

Fat & Sodium

Make sure the item you are eating doesn't have too much saturated fat, trans fat and sodium. Saturated fats and trans fat are linked to an increased risk for heart disease. Pay attention to sodium—the higher the sodium content compared to overall calories is indicative of a highly processed food. Aim to eat more whole, unprocessed foods.

Sugar & Added Sugar

There is an **indirect link** between sugar and cancer. Eating foods high in sugar may mean more calories that can eventually lead to excess body fat. There is strong evidence that excess body fat is linked to greater risk for 12 types of cancer. AICR recommends limiting consumption of sugar sweetened drinks along with limiting “fast foods” and other processed foods high in fat, starches and sugars for cancer prevention. The national guidelines recommend to consume less than 10% of our daily calories from added sugars. The American Heart Association recommends no more than 6 teaspoons (or 25g) of added sugar per day for women and no more than 9 teaspoons (or 36g) of added sugar per day for men.