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HEALTH MANAGEMENT THROUGH
MEAL PLANNING: FOOD LABELS



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I. WHY SHOULD WE READ FOOD LABELS

1. Reading food labels helps us choose good food.
2. Healthy food is not always expensive, so we can get healthy food and save money.

II. READING FOOD LABELS

A. How to Read Food Labels

1. Read food labels carefully. It can be very confusing initially.
2. Focus on the food label. Know your healthy eating goals: calories, carbs, fats, etc.
3. Don't get distracted by the package design.
4. Practice reading labels in supermarkets or grocery stores, each time you go.
5. A serving size is the portion of the product for which diet values are calculated. It may not fit your diet needs or meal plan. Be careful, most packages may contain more than one serving size.

B. How Many Calories

1. Indicates how much energy is in the food item by serving size.
2. Be careful if too many calories are from fats!

C. % Daily Values

1. Each percentage is based on a 2,000 calorie diet.
2. If you weigh less than 180 pounds, you probably need less than 2,000 calories.
3. For examples:
 - a. Male = 1,500 cal/day
 - b. Female = 1,200 cal/day

Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size		
Serving Per Container		
Amount Per Serving		
Calories	Calories From Fat	
% Daily Value*		
Total Fat	...g	...%
Saturated Fat	...g	...%
Cholesterol	...g	...%
Sodium	...mg	...%
Total Carbohydrate	...g	...%
Dietary Fiber	...g	...%
Sugar	...g	...%
Protein	...g	...%

D. Sample Label for Mac & Cheese

Start where it's marked in green →

Limit the nutrients in yellow {

Get enough of the nutrients in blue {

Footnote {

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)			
Serving Per Container 2			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 250		Calories From Fat 110	
% Daily Value*			
Total Fat			18%
Saturated Fat	3g		15%
Trans Fat	1.5g		
Cholesterol	30mg		10%
Sodium	470mg		20%
Total Carbohydrate	31g		10%
Dietary Fiber	0g		0%
Sugar	5g		
Protein	5g		
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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	60g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrat		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Quick Guide to % Daily Value (in pink)

- 5% or less is low
- 20% or more is high

E. Watch Out for Fat!

1. Saturated fat and cholesterol should be minimized.
2. Never eat food that contains trans fats.
3. Try fat free or low fat foods.
4. For example, compare whole milk and fat free milk.

Whole Milk

Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size 1 cup (236ml)		
Serving Per Container 1		
Amount Per Serving		
Calories 120	Calories From Fat 45	
% Daily Value*		
Total Fat	5g	8%
Saturated Fat	3g	15%
Trans Fat	0g	
Cholesterol	20mg	7%
Sodium	120mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate	11g	4%
Dietary Fiber	0g	0%
Sugar	11g	
Protein	9g	17%
<hr/>		
Vitamin A		10%
Vitamin C		4%
Calcium		30%
Vitamin D		25%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:		

Fat Free Milk

Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size 1 cup (236ml)		
Serving Per Container 1		
Amount Per Serving		
Calories 80	Calories From Fat 0	
% Daily Value*		
Total Fat	0g	0%
Saturated Fat	0g	0%
Trans Fat	0g	
Cholesterol	Less than 5mg	0%
Sodium	120mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate	11g	4%
Dietary Fiber	0g	0%
Sugar	11g	
Protein	9g	17%
<hr/>		
Vitamin A		10%
Vitamin C		4%
Calcium		30%
Vitamin D		25%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:		

F. Look at Sodium

1. Too much sodium in a diet may raise blood pressure.
2. Persons with diabetes should not exceed 2,400 mg of sodium per day.

G. Carbohydrates for Energy

1. Some foods have fiber which provides limited or no sugar, but helps digestion.
2. Sugars in label should be low when compared to the total amount of carbohydrates.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size

Serving Per Container

Amount Per Serving

Calories

Calories From Fat

% Daily Value*

Total Fat	...g	...%
Saturated Fat	...g	...%
Cholesterol	...g	...%
Sodium	...mg	...%
Total Carbohydrate	...g	...%
Dietary Fiber	...g	...%
Sugar	...g	...%
Protein	...g	...%

H. Proteins

1. Proteins are essential, especially for growth and maintaining muscles.
2. Remember, proteins from animal sources may have too much cholesterol and other fats.

I. Vitamins and Minerals

1. Remember, items that contain more than 20% Daily Value of vitamins and minerals – are good sources of them.
2. It is up to you to choose food that is healthy and that fits your dietary needs.

Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size		
Serving Per Container		
Amount Per Serving		
Calories	Calories From Fat	
% Daily Value*		
Total Fat	...g	...%
Saturated Fat	...g	...%
Trans Fat	...g	
Cholesterol	...g	...%
Sodium	...mg	...%
Total Carbohydrate	...g	...%
Dietary Fiber	...g	...%
Sugar	...g	
Protein	...g	...%
Vitamin A		...%
Vitamin C		...%
Calcium		...%
Vitamin D		...%

This concludes Module 5: Health Management Through Meal Planning: Food Labels. For more information on this topic, please see the curriculum.



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