

NAVIGATING THE FOOD LABEL

The food label is your road map to navigating food choices. By learning how to read and use food labels, you can make educated decisions about the foods you buy and eat.

To make the best decisions about your food, there are two main things to pay attention to on the label:

servicing size and **nutrient content**.



SERVING SIZE

Look at the serving size to find out what portion of the food is considered one serving. This is easy to overlook but is key to understanding the overall nutritional profile of your food.

CALORIES

Try to consume foods that pack the most nutrients per calorie. This helps you stay within your recommended calorie level while maximizing your nutrient intake.

FAT

Look for foods with a total fat content composed mostly of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, which help to promote a healthy heart.

FIBER

Fiber is a form of carbohydrate that helps you feel fuller longer and can aid in digestive health. Aim to fill your shopping cart with foods that will help you reach your recommended 25–28 grams of fiber for women and 31–34 grams for men!¹

PROTEIN

Protein helps to satisfy your hunger longer and fuels your muscles throughout the day. Include foods such as beans and peas, lean meats, low- or nonfat dairy foods, almonds and other nuts in your meals and snacks.

PUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE TO ACTION

In order to include food label all-stars that meet the 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommendations, stock your kitchen and pantry with low- or nonfat dairy foods, lean proteins and beans, whole grains, almonds and other nuts, fresh fruits and vegetables.

Aim to create breakfast options and snacks that include a combination of protein, healthy fats and fiber to give you the perfect start and keep you going throughout the day.

Here are a few delicious and nutritious ideas that can be made with staples that may already be in your pantry or fridge:

BREAK BREAKFAST BOREDOM

- Oatmeal with almonds and dried fruit
- Whole-grain toast with almond butter and banana slices
- Greek-style yogurt topped with crunchy high-fiber cereal, sliced almonds and fresh fruit
- Toasted whole-grain waffle topped with cottage cheese, sliced almonds and cinnamon

SENSATIONALIZE SNACK TIME

- Fresh apple slices with almond butter
- Super smoothie made with almond milk, 1 tablespoon of almond butter and fresh or frozen fruit
- Trail mix made with a combination of whole and slivered almonds, dried fruit and your favorite whole-grain cereal

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 ounce (28g)
or about 23 almonds

Amount Per Serving

Calories 160² Calories from Fat 130

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 14 g	22%
Saturated Fat 1 g	5%
Polyunsaturated Fat 3.5 g	
Monounsaturated Fat 9 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	0%
Sodium 0 mg	0%
Potassium 200 mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 6 g	2%
Dietary Fiber 4 g	12%
Sugars 1 g	
Protein 6 g	

Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 8%	Iron 6%
Vitamin E 35%	Folate 2%
Magnesium 20%	Phosphorus 15%

*Percent daily values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

1. U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*: Appendix 5: Nutritional Goals for Age-Gender Groups, Based on Dietary Reference Intakes and Dietary Guidelines Recommendations. Available at www.dietaryguidelines.gov.

2. A 2012 study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* shows that when measuring digestibility, whole almonds may provide about 20% fewer calories than originally thought. The findings show a one-ounce serving of almonds (about 23) has 129 calories versus the 160 calories currently listed on the Nutrition Facts Panel. Further research is needed to better understand the results of the study and how this technique for calculating calories could potentially affect the calorie count of other foods.

BUILD YOUR CART TO MEET THE GUIDELINES

By following these simple steps from Bonnie Taub-Dix, MA, RD, CDN, author of *Read It Before You Eat It* (Penguin Group, 2010), you can master shopping smart to set you and your family up for good health.

STEP 1: WRITE IT DOWN

Preparing for your shopping trip is an important component of success. Plan your week's meals and snacks by researching healthy and flavorful recipes in your favorite cookbooks and on websites, including www.AlmondBoard.com.

Keep track of your staples to always have the following nutritious multiuse foods on hand:

- All forms of almonds (whole, slivered, sliced, ground, oil, flour, butter, milk)
- Fresh, dried or frozen fruit
- Whole grains (whole-wheat crackers, brown and wild rice, whole-grain bread, low-fat popcorn, whole-grain pasta)
- Low- or nonfat dairy (cheese, yogurt, milk)
- Fresh or frozen vegetables

STEP 2: EXPLORE THE STORE

It's easy to walk your usual route around the grocery store, but you might be missing some nutrition powerhouses in areas that might surprise you. For example, the snack aisle has nuts and dried fruit, and the freezer section offers frozen fruits and vegetables.

To encourage healthy eating, many health professionals recommend "eating the rainbow." By doing so, you can ensure that your diet is rich in a variety of nutrients. An easy place to start is by shopping for color. Fill your cart with a variety of naturally occurring colors:

- Tan/brown: almonds and other nuts, potatoes, whole grains
- White: eggs, mushrooms, cauliflower, white beans, chicken breast, low-fat or skim milk
- Red: bell peppers, strawberries, apples, tomatoes, lean beef
- Orange: sweet potatoes, carrots, salmon
- Yellow: squash, pineapple, corn, eggs
- Green: broccoli, avocado, spinach, kiwi
- Blue/purple: grapes, eggplants, plums, blueberries

STEP 3: ASK QUESTIONS

Whether there is something specific that you can't find or you have a question about a certain product, don't be afraid to speak up. Seek out the food and nutrition experts at your local store to learn more about the foods they sell. Many grocers can help you with food-preparation ideas.

