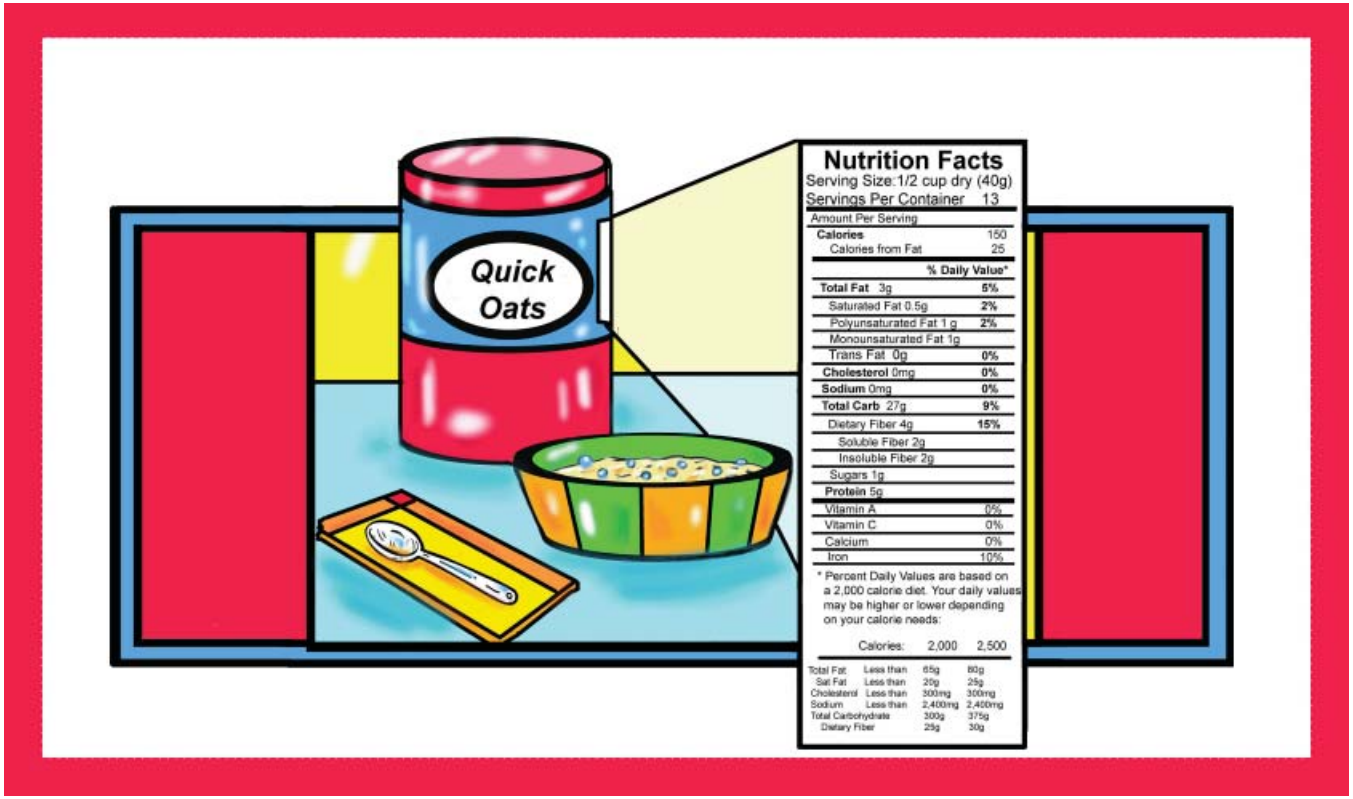
FOOD LABELS

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
EXTENSION
FOOD STAMP NUTRITION EDUCATION
EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

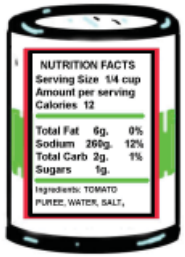


Food Labels

(teacher)
Sample question:
"Food labels contain information about the contents of the package. What kind of information do you look for on a food label?"

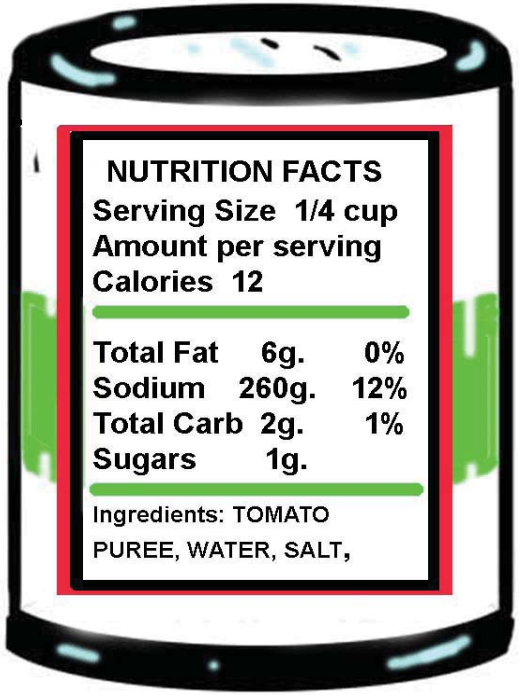
- Product name
- Product weight
- Company name and address that packages food.
- Nutrition Facts panel
- Health claims - ex. A diet rich in calcium may help prevent osteoporosis, a degenerative bone disease.
- Ingredients listing
  - ~ Allergen(s) list using common names that are present in the food.
    Example: Casein ingredient found in an ingredient listing will be identified in the list or on the label as a "milk" product.
- Cooking instructions

Food Labels



Food Labels


TOMATO
SAUCE
No Salt Added
NET WT. 14 OZ.


NUTRITION FACTS
Serving Size 1/4 cup
Amount per serving
Calories 12
Total Fat 6g. 0%
Sodium 260g. 12%
Total Carb 2g. 1%
Sugars 1g.
Ingredients: TOMATO
PUREE, WATER, SALT,

(teacher)
Ask participants: ***"What kind of information are you looking for when you read the list of ingredients on a food label?"***

Ingredient lists tell you what foods and additives have been added to the food when it is produced.
Examples of ingredients:

- Foods from the five food groups
- Herbs & spices
- Artificial & natural flavorings
- Chemical preservatives
- Artificial and natural colorings

Ingredients are listed in order of greatest amount to least amount. That is, the ingredient that weighs the most is listed first and the ingredient that weighs the least is listed last.

Processed cheese slices
Ingredients: MILK, WATER, MILK PROTEIN CONCENTRATE, MILKFAT, WHEY PROTEIN CONCENTRATE, SODIUM CITRATE, WHEY, SALT, GELATIN, SODIUM PHOSPHATE, SORBIC ACID AS A PRESERVATIVE, OLEORESIN PAPRIKA, ANNATTO (COLOR), ENZYMES, CHEESE CULTURE.

List of Ingredients
Processed cheese slices

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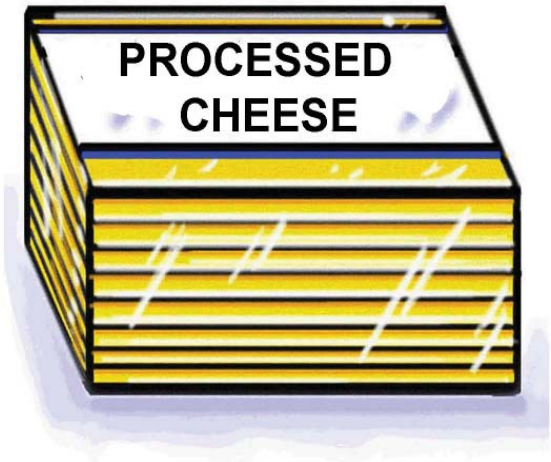


(teacher)
Share with participants:

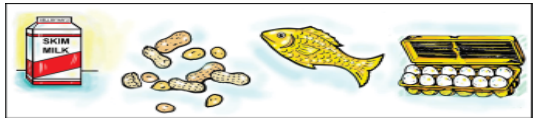
"Some foods cause allergies. The eight common foods that cause food allergies must be displayed in plain language on the food label."

8 common allergens
Tree nuts –examples: almonds, walnuts, pecans
Milk
Eggs
Fish
Crustacean shellfish
Peanuts
Soybeans
Wheat

Example of "plain language" – Whey and casein are in milk products. A label must identify them as a milk product.

Allergens must be listed on food labels in plain language.

Common allergens:
Tree nuts (examples: almonds, walnuts, pecans)
Milk
Eggs
Fish
Peanuts
Soybeans
Wheat
Crustacean shellfish



Food Labels 7

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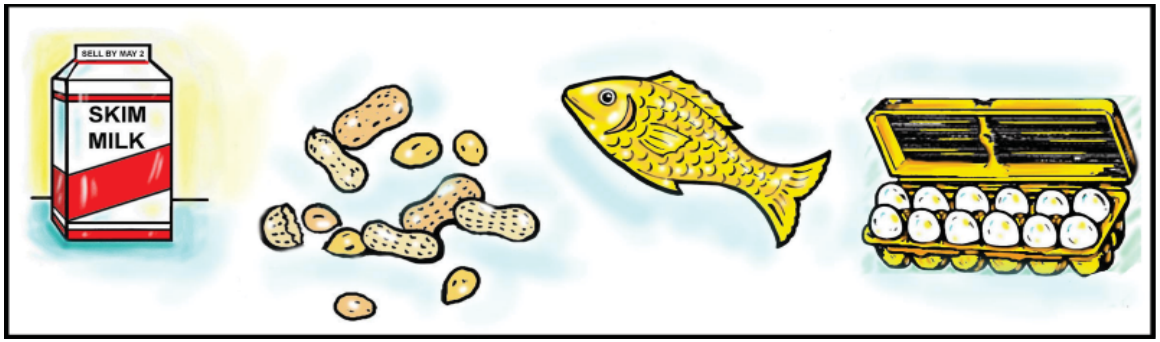


(teacher)
Sample question:

"Do you ever look at the Nutrition Facts panel that is found on a food label? If so, what information are you looking for?"

- Serving sizes
- Nutrient list
- Other nutrients
- Calories from fat
- % Daily values

Nutrition Facts Panel

Nutrition Facts Label

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 260	Calories from Fat 120
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 13g	**20%**
Saturated Fat 5g	**25%**
Trans Fat 2g	
Cholesterol 30mg	**10%**
Sodium 660mg	**28%**
Total Carbohydrate 31g	**10%**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0%**
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	

Vitamin A 4% • Vitamin C 2%

Calcium 15% • 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	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 * Carbohydrate 4 * Protein 4

(teacher)
Share with participants:

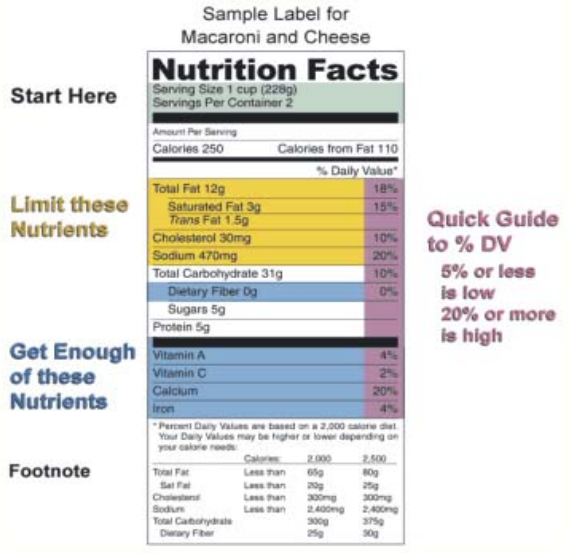
"The Nutrition Facts panel found on every food label makes it easier for you to know what is in the food you eat. It allows you to compare the nutritional content of foods with one another and as a result you can make better food choices."

Nutrition Facts

- **Serving Sizes:** Similar foods products must have similar serving sizes. This makes it easier to compare foods. Serving sizes are based on amounts most commonly eaten.
- **Calories:** Compare calorie content of food products. Be sure serving sizes are the same when making calorie comparisons.
- **Calories from fat:** It is recommended consumers eat no more than 30 percent of calories from fat.

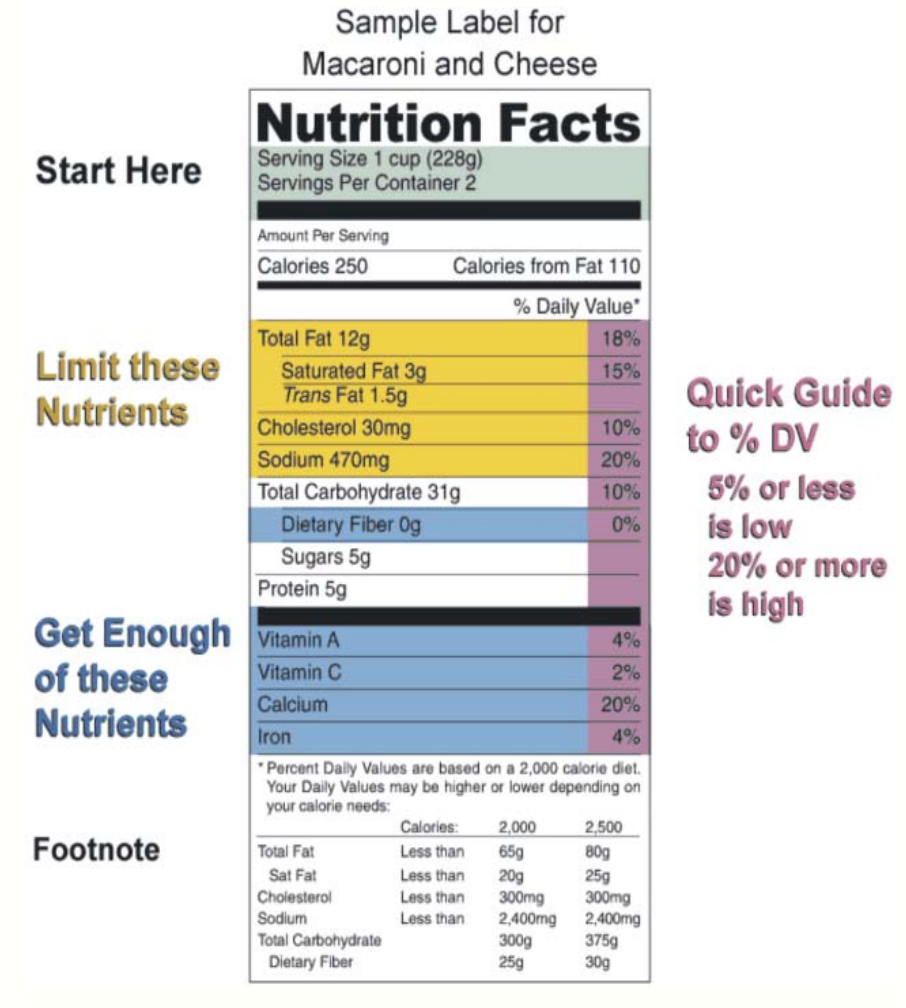
Nutrition Facts

- **Serving Sizes**
- **Calories**
- **Calories from fat**



Nutrition Facts

- **Serving Sizes***
- **Calories**
- **Calories from fat**



(teacher)
Share with participants:

"The % Daily Value for nutrients list on the Nutrition Facts label of the foods you eat shows how these foods fit into your daily diet."

Nutrition Facts (continued)

- **% Daily Value (DV)*** Shows how food fits into the 2,000-calorie daily diet. The amount single nutrients contribute to your diet can be evaluated using this tool. It is not a rigid number but is used as a reference value to compare with different products.

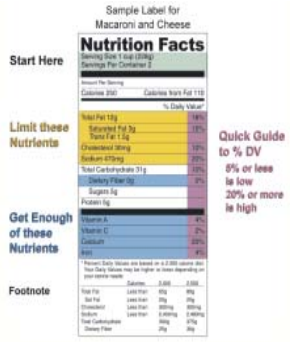
  For example: If you consume 2,000 calories per day, you should not consume more than 65 grams of fat or ***100% of the DV.***

Breakfast	**13 grams of fat**	**or 20% DV**
Lunch	**20 grams of fat**	**or 30% DV**
Dinner	**32 grams of fat**	**or 50% DV**
		100% DV

**Suggested Daily Values for fat, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrates and fiber are found towards the bottom of the Nutrition Facts panel.*

More About Nutrition Facts

- **% Daily Value (DV)**
- **Nutrient list**
- **Carbohydrates and protein**
- **Vitamins and Minerals**



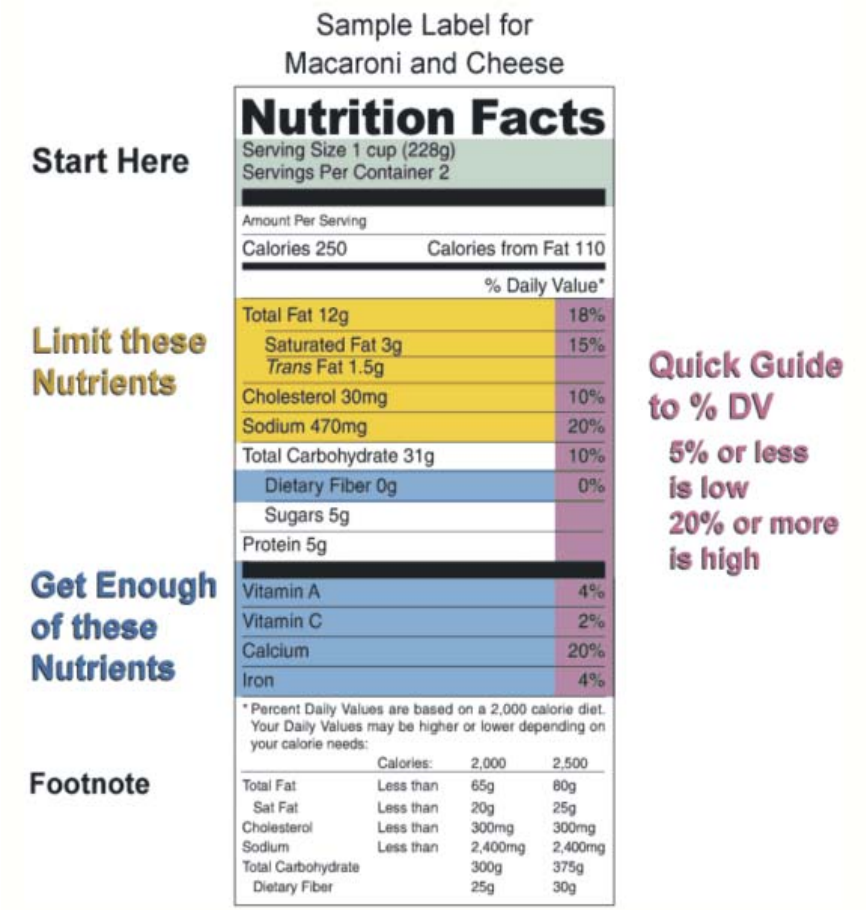
- **Nutrient list** List of nutrients important to the health of consumers.

- **Carbohydrates and protein**

- **Vitamins and Minerals** Only two vitamins, A and C, and two minerals, calcium and iron, are required on the food label. Other vitamins and minerals can voluntarily be listed by the food company.

More About Nutrition Facts

- **% Daily Value (DV)**
- **Nutrient list**
- **Carbohydrates and protein**
- **Vitamins and Minerals**



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 1.5g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
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	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

(teacher)
Share with participants:
"There are also nutrient content claims on food packages that can be confusing and not very helpful unless the descriptor word is understood. Let me give you some examples."

Words like ***free, low, lean, light, reduced*** may be a descriptor word on the food label. What do these words mean?

Free FAT Free- Foods must have less than 0.5 grams of fat per serving.
CALORIE Free – A food is calorie free if it has less than 5 calories per serving.

Light FAT – Food contains no more than half the fat per serving of a comparison food.
CALORIE - Food has at least 1/3 fewer calories per serving than a comparison food.

Low Low FAT – Food must have only 3 grams of fat or less per serving.
Low CALORIE – Food must be 40 calories or less per serving.

Words like free, low, and light may be used on the food label.

Free FAT Free - Foods must have less than 0.5 grams of fat per serving.

Light FAT - Food contains no more than half the fat per serving of a comparison food.

Low Low FAT - Food must have only 3 grams of fat or less per serving.

Words like *free*, *low*, and *light* may be used on the food label.

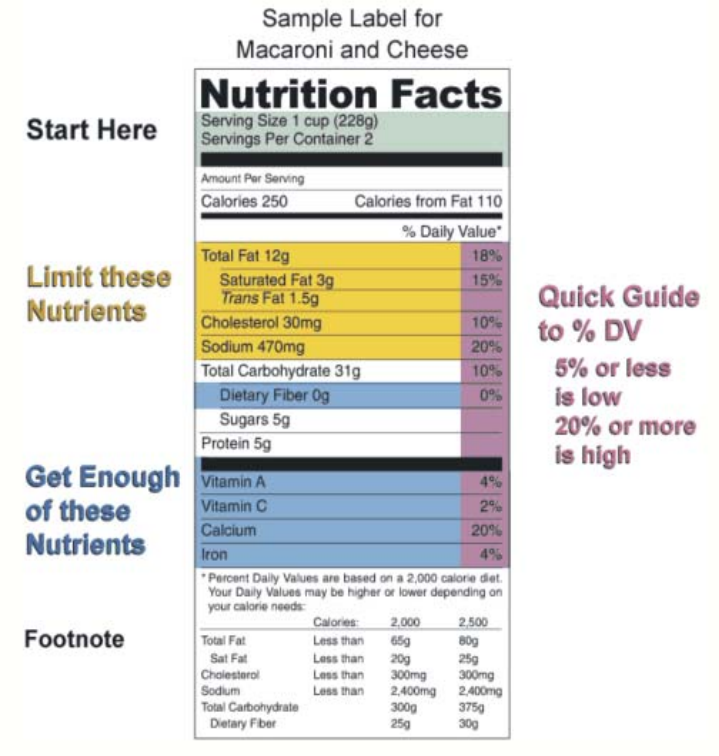
Free FAT Free - Foods must have less than 0.5 grams of fat per serving.

Light FAT - Food contains no more than half the fat per serving of a comparison food.

Low Low FAT - Food must have only 3 grams of fat or less per serving.

(teacher)
Share with participants:
"Look on the Nutrition Facts panel and find the % Daily Value for the descriptor word(s)."

For example:
If the package says ***High Calcium***, the Nutrition Facts panel should read % Daily Value = 20% or more for calcium as is the case for a serving of this macaroni and cheese.



Can this macaroni and cheese product have a label saying low cholesterol?

NO. In order for this product to be low in cholesterol the Nutrition Facts panel should read % Daily Value = 5% or less for cholesterol. Instead it reads 10% for this macaroni and cheese product.

Sample Label for
Macaroni and Cheese

Start Here

Limit these Nutrients

Get Enough of these Nutrients

Footnote

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 250 — Calories from Fat 110

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 1.5g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
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Quick Guide to % DV

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

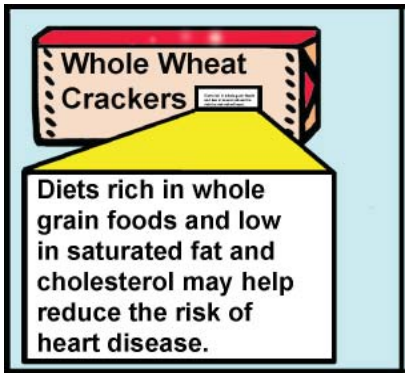
(teacher)
Share with participants:

"Often a food label will make a health claim. A health claim is a statement on a label that describes a relationship between a nutrient and a disease or health-related condition. A food must meet certain nutrient requirements to make a health claim."

Examples of health claim topics permitted on labels:

- Calcium & osteoporosis
- Fiber & heart disease
- Vitamins A or C & cancer
- Fat & cancer
- Saturated fat and cholesterol & heart disease
- Sodium & high blood pressure

Food Label Health Claim Statement



Food Labels 19

Food Label Health Claim Statement