

## Monthly Newsletter

# BETTER LIVING BASICS

## Understanding The Nutrition Facts Label

Before you purchase an item at the grocery store, do you look at the nutrition facts label to see what the item consists of? Or do you get overwhelmed with the loads of information? I know I do! I have broken down each part of the nutrition facts label to make it easier to understand!

**1. Serving Information** → 4 servings per container  
**Serving size** 1 cup (227g)

**2. Calories** → **Amount per serving**  
**Calories** 280

**3. Nutrients** →

	% Daily Value*
<b>Total Fat</b> 9g	<b>12%</b>
Saturated Fat 4.5g	<b>23%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 35mg	<b>12%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 850mg	<b>37%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 34g	<b>12%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	<b>14%</b>
Total Sugars 6g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	<b>0%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 15g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 320mg	25%
Iron 1.6mg	8%
Potassium 510mg	10%

**4. Quick Guide to percent Daily Value (%DV)**

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

\* 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.

For more information about reading the Nutrition Facts Label visit

<https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-facts-label/how-understand-and-use-nutrition-facts-label#calories>



# NUTRITION FACTS LABEL EXPLAINED

## 1. Serving Information

When checking the Nutrition Facts label, look at the number of servings and serving size. Serving sizes help compare foods and are given in cups or pieces, with metric amounts. The label's nutrients, including calories, are based on the serving size. Consider how many servings you eat. For example, one serving of lasagna is 1 cup. Eating two cups means consuming two servings, doubling the calories and nutrients listed.

## 2. Calories

Calories show how much energy you get from food. For example, one serving of lasagna has 280 calories. Eating the whole package gives you 1,120 calories. To stay healthy, balance calories consumed with those used. The general guide is 2,000 calories a day, but needs vary by age, sex, height, weight, and activity. Find your needs at [https://www. myplate.gov/myplate-plan](https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-plan). The servings you eat decide your total calorie intake. Eating too many calories can lead to overweight and obesity.

## 3. Nutrients

Nutrients to get less of include saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars. These may have negative health effects, and Americans tend to consume too much. High intake of saturated fat and sodium is linked to conditions like cardiovascular disease and high blood pressure. Added sugars can hinder meeting nutrient needs within calorie limits.

Added sugars are those added during food processing and differ from total sugars, which include both natural and added sugars. Nutrients to get more of include dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium. These nutrients can improve health and reduce the risk of certain conditions. Use the label to manage your nutrient intake.

## 4. The Percent Daily Value (%DV)

The % Daily Value (%DV) indicates the percentage of daily nutrient values in a serving of food. Daily Values are set amounts of nutrients to aim for each day. The %DV helps assess if a food is high or low in a nutrient, and it is displayed directly on the label, so no need to calculate. Generally, 5% DV or less is low, and 20% DV or more is high. Aim for foods high in Dietary Fiber, Vitamin D, Calcium, Iron, and Potassium, and low in Saturated Fat, Sodium, and Added Sugars. For example, a sodium %DV of 37% is considered high.



# MUST-TRY RECIPE

## Rice Porridge

### Ingredients (8 servings)

- 2 cups white rice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- 6 cups + 2 cups water
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup reduced-fat milk
- 1 teaspoon sugar or sweetener of choice per serving (optional)



### Directions

1. Wash hands and clean preparation area.
2. Combine rice, salt, and 6 cups water in a medium pot, uncovered, and bring to a boil on medium-high heat.
3. Continue to cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Stir in 2 cups of water and the milk and cook for another 10 minutes, stirring frequently.
5. If desired, add sugar or sweetener of choice.

### Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container

Serving size

Amount Per Serving

**Calories** **190**

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat** 5g **6%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

**Cholesterol** 0mg **0%**

**Sodium** 150mg **7%**

**Total Carbohydrate** 42g **15%**

Dietary Fiber 1g **4%**

Total Sugars 5g

Includes 4g Added Sugars **8%**

**Protein** 4g **8%**

Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium

\*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.

### CUSTOMIZE IT!

Top with your choice of fruit, such as blueberries, oranges, peaches, or mangoes, or a tablespoon of nuts.



# Current Programs

In February I will be starting Learn, Grow, Eat, and Go! at Evans Middle School! The students will set up their patio garden, learn how to maintain it, and grow their own vegetables! They will also learn how to make recipes with these vegetables and the nutritional benefits as well.



The first month of the Walk N' Talk program went so well at the Lubbock Dream Center! We learned the importance of lowering our added sugar intake in our beverages and the importance of hydration overall. I am excited to continue this program throughout February.

## Walk N Talk

RETHINK YOUR DRINK!

TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS

**Take a walk with us!**  
During this Walk 'N Talk series, friends, family, and others from the community come together to support one another in a fun, simple way.

**Those who participate:**

- Enjoy walking with friends
- Build confidence in choosing healthy beverages
- Develop healthy habits with ease
- Have a great time!

Walk N Talk is an 8-week series; each session lasts 45-60 minute  
Topics focus on beverages that support hydration, nutrition, and healthy weight.

I will be finishing up at Maggie Trejo Senior Center and Mae Simmons Senior Center in the early spring! This program teaches about MyPlate, Fight BAC!, and the overall importance of balanced eating.



## A FRESH START to a Healthier You!

An illustration of seven black forks arranged in a row. Each fork has a different fruit or vegetable balanced on its tines: a tomato slice, a mushroom, a strawberry, a lemon wedge, a kiwi slice, an orange, and a cucumber slice.

Join us and receive

- ◆ Support of friends
- ◆ Confidence to cook healthy meals for your children and family
- ◆ Practical cooking and shopping tips
- ◆ Handy kitchen tools
- ◆ Recipes for success in the kitchen

A small photograph showing a group of people in a kitchen. They appear to be engaged in a cooking activity or a meal preparation session.



# CURRENT NEWS

## Nutrition

**Did you know** that purchasing fruits and vegetables while they are in season is much cheaper than buying out of season fruits and vegetables?

Check out this seasonal produce guide to help you find out what is in season currently to help you save money during this holiday season! <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/resources/nutrition-education-materials/seasonal-produce-guide>



## Physical Activity

Physical activity can sometimes be forgotten in the comfort and rest of the holidays. Look for ways to add movement into the festivities naturally. For example, bring games to gatherings that require people to get up and move around. Enjoy a walk-through holiday light display. Create a holiday-themed scavenger hunt for all ages. Turn on some music and have a dance party! Staying active can be simple and practical based on your lifestyle and traditions.

## Gardening

Not all crops are well suited to every region. Identify plants that will work in your neck of the woods by looking up your plant zone—a geographic area based on average winter temperatures. Ashley Nussman-Berry notes that a common mistake for new gardeners is to plant the wrong crops: “I cannot grow citrus plants in zone seven, though I would really love to,” she says. “You have to grow what will survive in your area or you are just setting up your garden for failure.”

Type your zip code into the USDA's Plant Hardiness Zone Map to figure out your growing season and zone. This map divides North America into 11 planting zones. Take this information with you when buying seeds or seedlings (the packaging should clue you into which crops to grow).





# WHAT IS BLT?

Better Living for Texans (BLT) is a nutrition education program for adults and children that are SNAP participants and SNAP eligible. The BLT program helps people make healthy meals, improve their physical fitness, save money at the grocery store, grow their own foods, and adopt better food safety habits.

We provide research and evidence-based nutrition, health and wellness knowledge to empower individuals, families, and communities to make positive changes for healthier lives.

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Contact me if you have any questions or would like to talk about setting up a program!