

What's in a food package?

You can't judge a book by its cover, and you can't judge a packaged food by its name or "sales pitch". The truth is in the details in the Nutrition Facts and Ingredients List on the package. What do they tell you about whether a food is nutritious? Here is a quick guide.

Serving Size: All of the nutrition information is based on one serving. The manufacturer determines the size of one serving. This may be more or less than the amount that you are eating. *Also look at the number of servings in the container.* A bottle or bag that isn't very large may actually have more than one serving. Some large baked goods have 2 or 3 servings per single item.

% Daily Value: This is based on 2,000 calories per day. You may need more or fewer calories per day.

Total Fat: There are several types of fats. Some are healthy and others are not. In order to be called *low fat* a food must have 3g (grams) fat or less in one serving.

Saturated Fat: This fat is linked to heart disease and some cancers. Eat as little as possible. **Trans Fats:** Avoid these, because they increase your risk of heart

attack, stroke and diabetes. Trans fats come from *partially hydrogenated oils*, which are used in many packaged food products. **Polyunsaturated Fat & Monounsaturated Fat:** These two fats are important to good nutrition.

Cholesterol: Cholesterol from food sources are not necessary for a healthy diet. Dietary Guidelines recommend eating less than 300 mg / day.

Sodium: The recommended daily intake for adults is 2,300 mg (about a teaspoon).

Total Carbohydrates: This includes all types of grains (whole or refined), fiber and sugar. **Dietary Fiber:** Eat plenty of fiber. Look for bread and snacks with at least 2g fiber. Grams of whole grain in a food do not equal grams of dietary fiber.

Sugars: These have few nutrients. 4 grams of sugar is equal to 1 teaspoon.

Ingredients: The largest amounts are listed first. Avoid high fructose corn syrup and partially hydrogenated oils (trans fat).

Want more information? See www.nutrition.gov.

Recipe of the Week – Brown Rice Pilaf

Makes 3 cups

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup brown rice ("instant" brown rice with shorter cooking time is fine)

1 Tablespoon olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped onion

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup lemon juice

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground pepper

1 can (14 ounces) low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth

Sauté onion in olive oil until clear. Add broth, rice, lemon juice and pepper and bring to a boil. Lower heat to a simmer and cover. Cook until all the liquid has been absorbed. Add more lemon juice and pepper to taste.

Nutrition Information (per $\frac{1}{2}$ cup):

Calories: 117

Carbohydrates: 20 grams

Total fat: 3 grams

Saturated fat: 0.5 grams

Fiber: 3 grams

Sodium: 80 milligrams

Tip of the Week

The best way to get more out of your walking time and routine is to pick up the pace! Alternate between periods of your regular pace and faster walking, or add short bursts of jogging. For example, when you're walking outdoors, speed up between certain mailboxes, trees or other landmarks.

from www.mayoclinic.com