

# How to Read a Nutrition Label (Easy Guide)

## 1. Look at the Serving Size

Check how much one serving is and how many servings are in the package. If you eat more than one serving (or the whole package), you need to multiply the numbers.

## 2. Check the Calories

Calories are listed per serving. This helps you understand how much energy the food gives you.

## 3. Limit These Fats (Lower is Better)

People with FCS must maintain a very low-fat diet with fewer than 15% of their daily calories coming from total fat (less than 20 grams of total fat per day). Eating too much fat can raise the risk of pancreatitis for people with FCS. Other nutrients to eat less of include sodium (salt) and added sugars. Too much of these can increase health problems. Talk with your Registered Dietitian Nutritionist about specific foods or MCT oil that may be required to provide essential fats in the right amounts.

## 4. Get More of These Nutrients (Higher is Better)

Look for foods high in fiber, Vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium. Many people don't get enough of these daily.

## 5. Understand % Daily Value (%DV)

%DV shows how much a nutrient in one serving contributes to your daily needs, and it is based on a 2,000-calorie diet. Your needs may be higher or lower depending on how many calories you need in a day. For people with FCS, it is best to count the number of grams of total fat, rather than relying on the %DV. In general: 5% or less = low

Nutrition Facts	
Serving size	2 cups
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	210
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 2g	3%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	3%
Sodium 120mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate 32g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 26g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 17g	34%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 3978mg	310%
Iron 0.18mg	0%
Potassium 0mg	0%
Vitamin A	100%
Vitamin C	8%

\*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.

• 20% or more = high

## 6. Read the Ingredient List

Ingredients are listed from most to least. Scan for "hidden" fat terms in the ingredients. Avoid products where any of these appear near the top of the ingredient list:

- **Obvious fats and oils:** butter, cream, milkfat, ghee, lard, tallow, beef fat, chicken fat, shortening, margarine, vegetable shortening.
- **Plant oils:** palm, palm kernel, coconut, cocoa butter, vegetable oil, canola, soybean, cottonseed, safflower, sunflower, peanut, olive, avocado oil.
- **High-fat dairy and similar items:** whole milk, cream, cheese, cheese powder, sour cream, mayonnaise, "creamy" sauces or dressings.

## Tips for Making Healthier Choices

- Set goals for how many grams of total fat you need per meal (such as less than 5 grams of fat per meal). This will help you compare items to see which foods will fit into your planned low-fat meals, while helping you stay on track for your total fats eaten each day.
- Be cautious with "fat-free" and "low-fat" claims
  - "Fat-free" can still contain up to 0.5 g fat per serving; if you eat multiple servings, this adds up.
  - Always confirm the actual grams of total fat on the Nutrition Facts label rather than relying on front-of-pack claims.
- Use a quick mental checklist for each package. For every new food, run through:
  - What is the total fat per serving?
  - How many servings will I eat?
  - Are there any oils, butter, cream, nuts, seeds or chocolate in the ingredients?
  - Does this still fit within my per-meal and daily fat limits from my care team?