

## Food Labeling Lecture

### **Pre-Test: Nutrition Labeling Test**

**Correct**

#### **Questions to ask:**

- 1. How many of you use food labels to decide what food to buy?**
- 2. What information do you look at? Why?**
- 3. Anybody ever feel frustrated or turned off by food labels?**

You're shopping for lunch---and you're bombarded with choices. Which package of hot dogs has the least amount of fat? What's the difference between skim and whole milk? Any which fruit has more vitamin C—canned applesauce or peaches? You'll find answers on the food label.

#### **Why Labeling?**

New food labels tell a lot about food. They don't suggest what foods to eat—that's your decision. But labels can help you make your “personal best” food choices—choices that benefit you now and in the future, too.

Look good, feeling great! Teenagers' health goals should include a healthful diet. The teen years demand more nutrients and often more calories than any other time of life. That's because teenagers are still growing. But their “on-the-run” lifestyles often prevent them from getting the right amount of nutrients and calories they need.

In the short run, food choices make a difference. For example, a diet that's low in iron—typical among teenage girls—may result in anemia, which causes paleness and a tired feeling. A teenage athlete who cuts back on calories to trim down may not have enough energy for peak performance. And eating more calories than you use often shows up as extra pounds of body fat.

Down the road—in 20 or 30 years—the results of a poor diet may start to show up in other ways. If you eat a diet with too much fat and not enough fiber over a long period, you may be more likely to develop heart disease, obesity or cancer. And girls who don't eat enough calcium—rich foods, such as milk, cheese and yogurt, are more prone to osteoporosis later in life. Osteoporosis can cause a humpback-like appearance and brittle bones that break easily.

**What makes a healthful diet for teenagers? The Dietary Guidelines for Americas say:**

Aim for Fitness...

- Aim for a healthy weight
- Be physically active each day.

Build a Healthy Base...

- Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.
- Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
- Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
- Keep food safe to eat.

Choose Sensibly...

- Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.
- Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
- Choose and prepare foods with less salt.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

The good news is: Nutrition labeling can help you make food choices that meet these Dietary Guidelines and promote a lifetime of good health. With today's labels, you can:

- Compare one food with another.
- Choose foods that help provide the balance of nutrients your body needs.
- Plan meals and your whole diet so they are moderate, varied and balanced.

Effective May 1994, a new label format was required on food packages as a result of the Nutritional Labeling and Education Act (1990). The label features the following:

- New Title
- Uniform Listing of Nutrients Reflect Priority of Current Nutrition Recommendations
- Consistent Serving Sizes in Household Measures
- New Reference Value to Show How A Food Fits into a 2,000 Calorie Diet
- Footnote Information for Calculating Personal Nutrients Needs
- More Informative Ingredient List
- Health Claims and Nutrient Content Claims Must Meet Strict Definitions

**Required on all labels:**

- Identifying statement or name (common name of product)
- Net weight or net contents
- Artificial coloring, flavoring and preservations
- Name and address of manufacturer, packer, or distributor
- The style, type description of the product
- Special information that affects people with health problem
- A list of ingredients in order of weight in the package. The ingredients of the largest amount is listed first.
- Nutritional labeling must be done if the food has nutrients added or if it claims to be highly nutritious.

**Notes to know:**

- The largest amount of ingredient must be listed first on down to the smallest amount
- Percent of daily value - label based on 2000 calorie a day, indicates the percent of nutrients the product contains in one serving
- Total sodium intake per day - not more than 2,400 milligrams per day
- Nutritional facts required - must include facts if any nutritional information or claims are made i.e. provides essential vitamins and minerals.
- Label must conform to the following:
  - **Servings or portions size and servings or portions per container**
  - **Calories from fat per serving**
  - **Percent of daily value of fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrate (including dietary fibers and sugars and protein)**
  - **Percent of vitamin A, C, calcium and iron**
  - **a notation that the daily values are reference numbers based on a daily diet of 2000 and 2500 calories**
  - **some labels may tell the approximate number of calories in a gram of fat, carbohydrates, and protein**
- Some labels may tell the approximate number of calories in a gram of carbohydrates, protein and fat
- Purpose of UPC (universal product code) on label - accurate inventory, speed the check-out process, save time updating prices
- Asterick \*
  - read the small print for any information with an asterick
  - such information may give exception to what is stated in larger print

**Label definitions/terms**

**low in** - the food could be eaten frequently without exceeding recommended amounts i.e. fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium or calories. Low in fat means that one serving has no more than 3 grams of fat/

**reduced, less, or fewer** - the food must have at least 25% less of something (fat, calories, sodium) than a comparison food. The term reduced is used when the food has been nutritionally altered.

**good source of** - one serving of the food contains 10 - 19% of the daily food value for a particular nutrient organic and natural

**organic and natural** - have not been defined by law

**high source of fiber** - at least 20% from fiber

**juice** - must be 100% juice. Products using the terms fruit drink or fruit beverage may contain less than 10% fruit juice.

### **Dates on labels:**

**sell date** - indicates the last day the product should remain on the store shelf. Allows a reasonable amount of time for home storage/use after that date. May also say "sell by \_\_ (date) \_\_ or best if purchased by \_\_ (date) \_\_".  
Examples - dairy products, cold cuts.

**use by date** - product may still be safe to eat after the date has passed. Quality will start to go down.  
Examples - breads, cereals, dressings

**open dating** - gives consumer an idea of how long a product can remain wholesome and safe. A package date doesn't guarantee quality; that depends upon how the product was handled

**Video - Label-Ease, Dairy Council, 12 minutes**

**Handouts A & B**

**Questions to Ask?**

1. What's the problem with focusing on only one or two nutrients on a label? *(You don't get a complete picture of the food)*
2. Why is it important to look at nutrients like calcium, protein, and vitamin A. . .not just the fat and cholesterol on a food label?  
*(When you look at just fat and cholesterol, a soft drink looks nutritious. However, your body needs about 40 nutrients to stay healthy. Looking at vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients on the food label helps you focus on getting enough of these things—not just avoiding too much of the “excesses.”)*
3. Why don't we just avoid all foods that have any “nutrition minuses?”  
*(Many foods with a minus or two have lots of pluses. . .so they're very nutritious. Some foods with no minuses, also have no pluses. . .so they're not nutritious at all.)*

**Distribute the LABEL-EASE wallet cards to class if available from the Dairy Council.**

**Handouts 1,2,3,4 - practice the system using the labels**

**Review: Crossword Puzzle**