

# Reading Nutrition Facts



Reading the Nutrition Facts label is a great way for us to make nutritious food choices. We can learn a lot about a food from its Nutrition Facts Label, but it can be confusing! Here are a few key points to use when reading the Nutrition Facts Label. This is an example of Cool Ranch Doritos:

## 1. Serving Size

All of the information on the Nutrition Facts Label is based off of how much is in one serving size. The serving size is an estimate on what might be appropriate for the average US adult. Labels may also list the serving size in many different amounts. For example, one serving of Cool Ranch Doritos is given as 1 oz, 28 grams, or 12 chips. All 3 tell you the same serving size.

## 3. Calories

Calories are our bodies' energy source. Calories come from the fats, carbohydrates, proteins in the food. The Nutrition Facts Label tells us how much energy is in one serving. Foods high in calories per serving, (400 or more) are called "calorie-dense." If the food is low in calories per serving (100 or less), it is a low-calorie food. Awareness of the amount of energy in your food can help you learn how much is needed to satisfy your energy needs.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 oz. (28g/About 12 chips)	
Servings Per Container About 9	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 150	Calories from Fat 70
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>12%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 180mg	<b>8%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 18g	<b>6%</b>
Dietary Fiber 2g	<b>6%</b>
Sugars less than 1g	
<b>Protein</b> 2g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 2%	Iron 0%
Vitamin E 6%	Thiamin 4%
Riboflavin 2%	Vitamin B6 4%
Phosphorus 4%	Magnesium 4%

	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

**Ingredients:** Whole Corn, Vegetable Oil (Corn, Canola, Soybean and/or Sunflower Oil), Maltodextrin (Made From Corn), Salt, Tomato Powder, Corn Starch, Lactose, Whey, Skim Milk, Corn Syrup Solids, Onion Powder, Sugar, Garlic Powder, Monosodium Glutamate, Cheddar Cheese (Milk, Cheese Cultures, Salt, Enzymes), Dextrose, Malic Acid, Buttermilk, Natural and Artificial Flavors, Sodium Acetate, Artificial Color (Including Red 40, Blue 1, Yellow 5), Sodium Caseinate, Spice, Citric Acid, Disodium Inosinate, and Disodium Guanylate.  
**CONTAINS MILK INGREDIENTS.**

## 2. Servings Per Container

This bag of Doritos has 9 servings per bag. The label information must be multiplied by 9 to know the nutrition information for the whole bag. (9x150 = 1350 calories/bag)

## 4. Nutrients

All food is made of fats, carbohydrates, proteins, or a combination. We need all 3 for a nutritious and satisfying meal. Use this information to help build balanced meals and snacks. The other nutrients (sodium, calcium, etc.) don't give us energy, but help our bodies to perform all of its functions to stay healthy. For example, fiber helps keep our digestive systems healthy. A "nutrient-dense food" has plenty of good-for-you nutrients!

## 5. Ingredients List

The ingredients list shows everything that went into the food, in order of greatest to least. Because "whole corn" and "vegetable oil" are first ingredients listed, they make up more of the Doritos than onion powder, which is further down the list. Longer ingredient lists mean that the food is more processed.

## Check your Beverages!

Drinks can be tricky, because sometimes one drink container may have many servings, even though it looks like a single serving. Looking at the Nutrition Facts Label and practicing how to read them will help you catch on to these confusing products!

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 8 fl oz (240 mL)  
 Servings Per Container 2.5

#### Amount Per Serving

**Calories** 110

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat** 0g **0%**

**Sodium** 50mg **2%**

**Total Carbohydrate** 31g **10%**

Sugars 31g

**Protein** 0g

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

CONTAINS\*\* : CARBONATED WATER, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, CONCENTRATED ORANGE JUICE AND OTHER NATURAL FLAVORS, CITRIC ACID, SODIUM BENZOATE (PRESERVES FRESHNESS), CAFFEINE, SODIUM CITRATE, GUM ARABIC, ERYTHRORBIC ACID (PRESERVES FRESHNESS), CALCIUM DISODIUM EDTA (TO PROTECT FLAVOR), BROMINATED VEGETABLE OIL AND YELLOW 5.

\*\*FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE. FOR COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, CALL 1-800-433-2652.

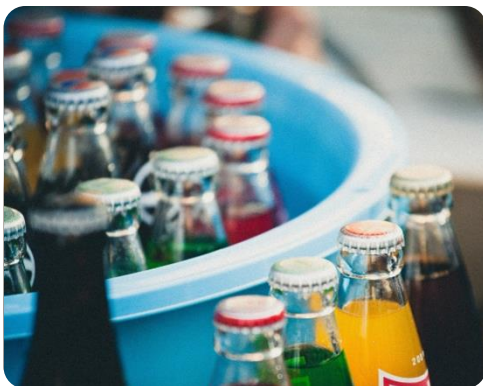


## Let's Practice!

Answer the following questions using the Nutrition Facts Label from the bottle of Mountain Dew:

1. How many ounces are in **1 serving**?
2. How many **servings per container** are in the entire bottle?
3. How many **calories** are in **1 serving**?
4. If you drank this **entire bottle of Mountain Dew**, how many **calories** would you have consumed?
5. What **2 ingredients** make up most of the drink?

Reading Nutrition Food Labels can be challenging, but as you continue to practice reading, you'll get better at choosing nutritious foods at the grocery store. Next time you're at the store, make sure to pick up different products and practice comparing the nutrition labels. Don't forget to teach the kids how to read nutrition labels, too! Make it into a game every time the family goes grocery shopping!



# Nutrition Building Blocks

**Carbohydrates (carbs)** provide quick energy, fiber, and satisfaction.

1. **We need carbs.** A majority of our food should come from carbs, or 45-65% of our daily food intake. It is our body's preferred source of energy. A child running during a game of tag uses carbs as the main source of quick energy. **There is no such thing as "good" or "bad" carbs**, but there are "complex" and "simple" carbs. Eating a lot of simple carbs is hard on our bodies because they are very quickly digested and can leave us feeling hungry. Complex carbs take awhile to digest, are easier on our bodies, and provide fiber, which leaves us satisfied after a meal.
2. **What foods have carbohydrates?** Simple carbs are in white bread, white pasta, white rice, juices, smoothies, soda, candy, chips, crackers, pretzels, muffins, doughnuts, cookies, and sweetened teas. Complex carbs are in whole fresh/frozen fruits and vegetables, 100% whole grains - breads, bagels, crackers, pastas, tortillas, chips, and crackers, beans, nuts, and legumes.

**Fats** provide long-lasting energy, flavor and satisfaction.

1. **How much fat do we need?** Fat should provide ~30% of our daily food intake. It is an essential nutrient that helps our bodies absorb other nutrients, such as vitamins in cooked vegetables.
2. **What foods do they come from?** Fats are found in animal foods such as eggs, milk, yogurt, cheese, ice cream, butter, lard, chicken, red meat, pork, and seafood. They are also found in plant foods like avocado, peanuts, almonds, walnuts, pecans, sunflower seeds, and extra virgin olive oil.
3. **While there are no good or bad fats, there are fats that can be harmful if we eat them too often.** Trans saturated fats and animal-based saturated fats should be limited. You can easily lower these by filling your plate with more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
4. **There are also fats that are very good for us!** Fats found in plant foods and seafood have many health benefits, including heart health.

**Proteins** provide fullness with meals, body functions, growth, and recovery.

1. **How much do we need?** Not much! Only 10-15% of our daily food intake should come from protein. This is why it is only recommended to cover  $\frac{1}{4}$  of our plates.
2. **What foods do they come from?** Animal based proteins include dairy products, eggs, seafood, chicken, and all meats. Plant based proteins include nuts, peanuts, seeds, beans, legumes, and even whole grains have a little!
3. **Should I eat a lot of protein?** Unless intensely exercising, there is no reason to eat more protein.

**Fiber** provides fullness with meal, feeds our gut bacteria to keep our digestive systems healthy, and promotes heart health.

1. **Fiber is only found in plant-based foods.** This includes whole grain products such as breads, pastas, tortillas, and crackers, as well as beans, nuts, seeds, peanut butter, fruit, and vegetables.
2. **How much do we need?** A good way to eat fiber daily is by including fruits and vegetables at meals and snacks. To get even more fiber, include other plant foods, like whole grains or beans.