

## Guideline for Reading Food Labels

Learning how to read the nutrition information panel and ingredient list on a food label is essential in making healthy food choices.

### Nutrition Information Panel

Servings Per Package Serving Size: 35g		
	Per Serve (approx 8 biscuits)	Per 100g
Energy	570 kJ	1640kJ
Protein	3.9	11.2
Fat		
Total	3.4g	9.6g
Saturated	0.4g	1.2g
Trans	0.0g	0.0g
Polyunsaturated	1.0g	3.0g
Monounsaturated	2.0g	5.4g
Cholesterol	Nil	Nil
Carbohydrate		
Total	20.5g	58.7g
Sugars	0.6g	1.6g
Dietary Fibre	4.3g	12.2g
Niacin	2.6mg	7.4mg
Sodium	158mg	450mg
Iron	1.3mg	3.8mg
<b>Ingredients:</b> Grains (89%)[ Wheat, corn, poppy seeds, Linola seeds (2.0%), Canola seeds, Rye Barley, Sunflower kernels, Soya bean (0.5%)], Sunflower oil, Salt, Sugar <b>May contain traces of nut, dairy, egg or other seeds</b>		

1. Always look at the per 100g column (this allows for comparison between products)
2. FAT: Look for products with less than 5g of total fat per 100g. Aim for the lowest saturated content when comparing products
3. SUGAR: Look for products with less than 10g of sugar per 100g. If the product contains fruit allow 20g of fruit per 100g
4. FIBRE: If a product contains 3-6g of fibre per serve then this is a 'high' fibre product. Aim for the highest fibre content
5. SALT: Try to choose "low salt" or "reduced salt" products. Look for products with less than 300mg sodium per 100g. The definition of "low salt" is less than 120mg of sodium per 100g

### Ingredient List

Ingredients are listed in order from the largest to the smallest amount used, based on the weight of the ingredient. The major ingredients in a food product are usually listed in the first three ingredients.

### Words that mean fat, sugar and salt

#### **FAT**

Vegetable oil/fat  
Animal Fat/oils  
Shortening  
Cofa  
Lard  
Palm oil  
Coconut oil  
Butter  
Milk Solids  
Monoglycerides  
Diglycerides  
Coconut

#### **SUGAR**

Sucrose  
Maltose  
Lactose  
Dextrose  
Fructose  
Mannitol  
Sorbitol  
Xylitol  
Glucose Syrup  
Corn syrup  
Dissacharides  
Honey

#### **SALT**

Sodium  
Na  
Monosodium Glutamate  
MSG  
Sodium Bicarbonate  
Sodium ascorbate  
Sodium Lactate  
Yeast Extracts  
Baking Soda  
Vegetable salt

### Nutrition Claims – What do they really mean?

- Reduced Fat:** at least 25% less fat than the original product in the same brand, but the food may still be high in fat.
- % Fat free:** can only be used for “low fat” product with the percentage based on the weight of fat in 100 grams of food. (In a 100 gram serving of food marked 98% fat free, that serving has 2 grams of fat.)
- Cholesterol Free:** This does not mean low fat. Cholesterol is only found in food which contains animal fats (only animal' make cholesterol – plants do not). For example, vegetable oils (canola, olive, sunflower etc) are cholesterol free, but are 100% fat.
- ‘Light’ or ‘Lite’:** This does not necessarily mean low in energy or fat etc. It may mean light in colour, lightly toasted, light in salt, light in taste.
- No added Sugar:** No added refined sugars. It does not necessarily mean the food is low in sugar, because the food may be high in natural sugars (for example, fruit juices).
- ‘Diet’:** Usually means artificially sweetened.
- Source of fibre:** More than 1g of fibre per 100g
- High Fibre:** at least 3g of fibre per 100g

### Date Marking: ‘Use By’ vs. ‘Best Before’

**‘Best Before’:** Foods with a shelf life of less than two years have a ‘best before’ date. It may still be safe to use these foods after this date, but they have lost quality and some nutritional value.

**‘Use by’:** Foods that should not be consumed after a certain period of time for health and safety reasons have a ‘used by’ date and should be consumed by this date.