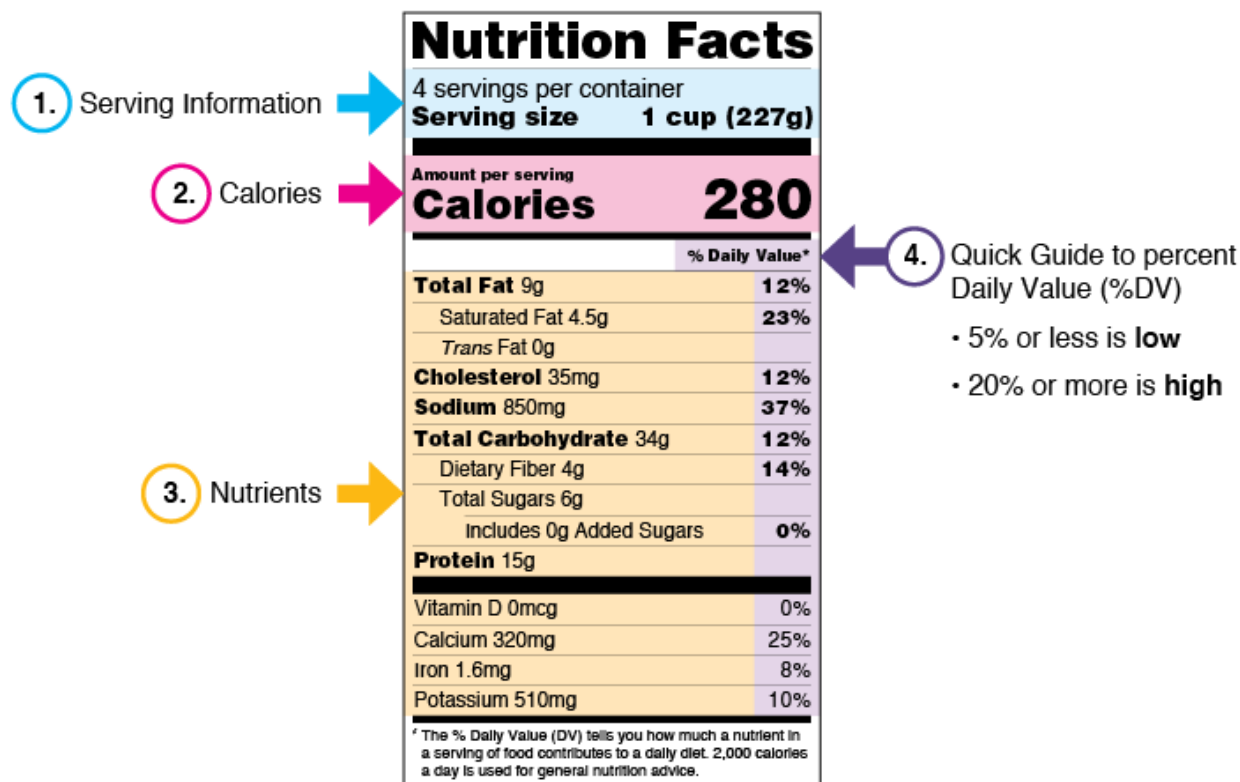


## Reading Food Labels

Reading food labels helps you determine how foods can affect your blood glucose levels and can be an effective tool in managing your blood sugars, blood pressure and weight.



- Serving size:** On a food label the serving size tells you the quantity of food that contains the listed amount of calories, fat, carbohydrates, etc. for that food. The serving size listed may be smaller than what you normally eat. You may want to reconsider the amount of food you are eating based on the serving size listed.
- Counting calories:** Calories are what influence your weight. Track calorie amounts to help reach weight goals.
- Counting nutrients:** Each of these categories are helpful in building a balanced and healthy meal plan.

**Counting carbohydrates:** Look at the Total Carbohydrate (listed in grams). Don't just look at the Sugars listed, because it's only part of the total carbohydrates. Carbohydrates turn into sugar during digestion. (Aim for 1 g of fiber for every 10 g of carbohydrate).

**Counting fiber:** Fiber helps to prevent blood sugar from spiking too quickly. Aim for 25-30 grams of fiber per day. If the serving has more than 9 grams of fiber, then you can divide the total grams of fiber and subtract half of that from the total carb count.

**Counting sodium:** You should limit sodium to help prevent high blood pressure. It is recommended to eat less than 2400mg of sodium per day if you **not** have high blood pressure. For high blood pressure, aim for less than 1500mg of sodium per day.

**Counting protein:** For most adults the goal is 1.0 g to 1.2 g of protein per kilogram (kg) of body weight per day. (kg=pounds÷2.2)

- % Daily value:** This is based on a 2,000 calorie diet and should be individualized to your specific needs. In general, 5% or less is low and 20% or more is high but discuss with your health care team.

**"Net Carbs"** or other nutrient claim meanings: Many food companies make claims about the amount of carbohydrate in their products. However, "net carbs", doesn't have a legal definition from the FDA and they are not used by the American Diabetes Association.