

## Making sense of the small print

It is a legal requirement for all food to display a nutrition information panel. This can be used to get an indication of what is in the food you are eating or used as a tool to compare two similar products.

Do you know what you are looking for when reading labels?

Different foods will produce very different nutrition panels, so naturally they will not all be the same and you will have to look for different things specific to the food type you are looking at. Selected product labels may give information for additional nutrients which can be taken into considerations when assessing a new product. There is no perfect product so consider the whole label and if its ticking a few positive boxes to know if it's a good choice as part of a balanced diet.

When reading a nutrition information panel there are things to look out for that generally indicates a healthy product, nutrition information panels have to include the following information and generally look like this:

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
SERVES PER PACKAGE 19		
SERVE SIZE – 84g (2 slices)		
Essential criteria	Per serve (84g)	Per 100g
Energy	991kJ (236cal)	1180g
Protein	9.2g	11.0g
Fat, total	4.4g	5.2g
- saturated fat	0.5g	0.6g
Carbohydrates	37.6g	44.8g
- sugars	2.4g	2.8g
Sodium	361mg	430mg
Non-essential criteria		
Fibre	4g	4.8g

Check how many serves per product as it may be more than you think and lead to over consumption.

For cereal, bar and bread products aim for sugar to be <1/2, ideally <1/3 of the total carbohydrates.

Aim for less than 1800kJ per 100g

Aim for less than 10g per 100g, excluding nuts and good fat foods.

Aim for less than 5g per 100g

Important to consider when choosing carbs that there is 2-3g+ fibre per serve. Or a low amount for a pre comp carb

### Per 100g

Best used for comparing products of a similar nature to determine the better product to choose.

*The fat per 100g on the label above is 5.2g – you may not consume 100g but if you compare it to a product that has 10.9g fat/100g than this product is going to be a better choice because its lower in fat.*

### Per Serve

Best used to get an idea of what you will be consuming in each serve rather than as a comparison with other products as they may have quite different serving sizes. When comparing the serve size its important to check how many serves are in the product to know how much you are eating, you may eat the whole thing but it serves 5.

*The serve size on the label above is 2 slices – if you have 4 slices you will be getting more than just 991kJ even if you have it 'at one serve'*

### Ingredient list

Ingredients are listed in descending order from most to least in the product. All ingredients included have to be listed; with detail including the ingredients of ingredients or the percentage of specific ingredients. If undesirable products are within the first 3 ingredients or the remaining ingredients you can't pronounce or are numbers, avoid that product.

### Nutrition claims for fat and sugar

There is a lot of confusion about different terms used to describe the fat content, at a glance this is what they mean.

**Light or Lite** – this generally refers to the fat content of products, for it to carry this term it must have less than 3g per 100g of food or drink. In the special case of olive oil, light refers to the colour not the fat content.

**Reduced...** – this mean there is less of an ingredient than the original product, this is generally less fat, sugar or sodium, it may not always mean that it has a small amount, just less than the original.

**Diet** – most diet products are low kJ, have low fat and reduced sugar or sugar replaced is with an artificial sweetener.