

# Reading Food Labels

All packaged foods have “Nutrition Facts.” But what do they mean? With one in three children in California overweight or at risk of becoming overweight, understanding these labels can help you make healthier choices for your children.

**Serving size** is the amount of food to be eaten at one time by an adult. All information below the serving size is based on only the individual serving, not the entire box or can of food. Be sure to look at the servings per container to find the total number of servings found in a food package.

Eating more **calories** than a child needs can lead to obesity and related health problems. It is recommended that 1 year olds consume an estimated 900 calories a day, while 5 year olds consume approximately 1400 calories a day to maintain a healthy diet.

**Fat**, especially saturated fat and trans fat, should be limited since it's linked to obesity in children. Fried foods, whole-milk dairy products, fatty meats and vegetable oil are among those high-fat products to be limited.

**Sugar** can lead to childhood obesity and increase your child's risk of dental disease. Sugar should always be eaten in moderation and artificial sweeteners should be avoided as they are not recommended for children under 5.

The **% daily value** tells you what percentage of the total recommended daily amount of each nutrient is in each serving for an adult (based on a 2,000 calorie per day diet). Keep in mind the recommended number of calories a child should consume is far lower.

**Vitamins** help build strong bones, give your child energy and can help prevent illness. Buy and serve foods high in vitamins, including vitamin A and C, iron and calcium.

Amount Per Serving		% Daily Value*
<b>Nutrition Facts</b>		
Serving Size 1 cup 160g (160 g)		
Servings per container 2		
<b>Calories 115</b> Calories from Fat 12		
		<b>% Daily Value*</b>
<b>Total Fat</b> 1g		2%
Saturated Fat 0g		1%
Trans Fat 0g		
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg		0%
<b>Sodium</b> 336mg		14%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 23g		8%
Dietary Fiber 4g		16%
Sugars 4g		
<b>Protein</b> 2g		
<b>Vitamin A</b> 4%	<b>Vitamin C</b> 0%	
<b>Calcium</b> 2%	<b>Iron</b> 6%	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:		
	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
Fiber		25g      30g
Calories per gram:		
Fat	9	• Carbohydrate 4      • Protein 4

For more information on healthy eating and FIRST 5 Santa Clara County programs, please call (408) 260-3700 or visit [www.first5kids.org](http://www.first5kids.org).

