

Eat Like an Expert

November 3, 2010

Shopping Smart (Continued)

Facts about Nutrition Facts Panel

Serving size is a standard set by FDA. It represented a typical serving in the late 1980's

Serving size **may not** be your portion size. Compare your portion with the standard to adjust nutrient values

Calories are rounded to the nearest 10 (for foods with more than 50 calories per serving). You cannot simply multiply the calorie value for each nutrient to get the number of calories

Many food companies have foods analyzed by a laboratory for nutritional content – these are the numbers you may see on the label

Macronutrients (Fat, Carbohydrate, Protein) are listed in gram quantities. There are approximately 28 grams per ounce.

Total fat, saturated fat and trans fat must be listed on the label. Voluntary listing monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fat is permitted

Cholesterol and **Sodium** are listed in milligram (mg) quantities. There are 1,000 milligrams in a gram.

Vitamins and minerals are listed as percent of the Daily Value(DV). Daily Value represents the highest number recommended for any age group (over 2). The Daily Values have not been updated since the labeling law took effect in 1993.

Vitamin A, vitamin C, Calcium and Iron must be listed on the label. Other vitamins and minerals may be added voluntarily.

Although FDA set a DV for protein, calculation is complicated as it must account for digestibility and constituent building blocks. Therefore, you will always see the amount of protein, but seldom the %DV.

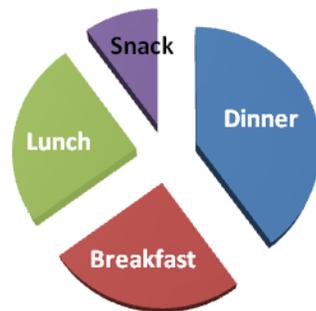
Using labels

How many meals/snacks do you eat per day? What is your largest meal?

For many of us, dinner is the largest meal. Although it is recommended to 'eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a pauper', many of us prefer the traditional large dinner.

Do not eat more than ½ your total calories at your largest meal. Consider 40% of your calories at your largest meal, then divide 60% among 2 meals and a snack.

Calories



Based on your nutrition analysis, choose one or 2 nutrients to focus on. Examples – calories and saturated fat.

Saturated fat should be less than 10% (preferably 7% of total calories).

If total calories = 1,800

Saturated fat = 180 calories

At 9 calories per gram, you should eat no more than (180 divided by 9) 20 grams per day.

If you get 40% of your calories at dinner, then you can eat 8 grams of saturated fat at dinner.

Some fat will come from meat, some from the butter on your vegetables or your salad dressing, some will come from dessert. It is very easy to consume more than 8 grams saturated fat at a meal.

Consider:

Food	Amount	Calories	Saturated Fat
Chicken breast	4 oz	187	1.2
Turkey	4 oz	125	0.5
Salmon	5 oz	260	2.3
Steak, T-bone	5 oz	460	14.5
Salad dressing, French	2 Tbs	120	2.7
Buttered asparagus	1 cup	80	2.7
Turkey stuffing	1 cup	355	3.5
Candied sweet potato	½ cup	105	0.1
Pumpkin pie	1/6 of 8" pie	230	2.2

How would you choose your dinner items based on the above information?

Like you, nutrition experts will enjoy Thanksgiving dinner with the trimmings. However, they may eat more conservatively on the days before Thanksgiving or increase their exercise so that traditional indulgent foods do not permanently add to their body fat.

This table does not mean that one food is bad and another good. However, it may help you to decide how to balance your indulgent dinners with others that are leaner to have a healthy meal pattern.

Other label information

“Certified organic” designates how a food is grown or animals raised. It does not mean the food is more nutritious.

“No added sugar” does not mean the food is sugar-free. Fruits and milk naturally contain sugar. Dried fruit has more sugar than raw fruit, because the water is removed. Most people can consume sugar in moderation.

High fructose corn syrup is another sugar, no better or worse than table sugar (sucrose). It has the same calorie value and is metabolized (used by your body) in the same way as sugar.

Sweeteners such as aspartame (NutraSweet), sucralose (Splenda) or stevia (Truvia, Purevia) have no calories and are many times sweeter than sugar. In individual packets, they must be combined with starch or sugar, which may provide minimal calories. Stevia is a natural sweetener from the stevia plant.

A warning must accompany products with NutraSweet. One of the components cannot be metabolized by people with the disease, phenylketonuria. Other sweeteners need not carry this warning.

Vitamin B12 is not listed on many food labels. However, it is a particular concern for senior citizens. Their ability to absorb the form of vitamin B12 found in food is reduced. You get vitamin B12 in animal foods, yeast, fortified soy milk or multivitamin supplements. Vitamin B12 does not give you energy.

Shopping Smart

Always emphasize the perimeter of the food market. Fresh fruits and vegetables will be found on one end. Milk and other dairy products are always found at the far end of the market (away from the checkout counter). This forces you to walk the entire store to buy milk.

Fresh meat, poultry and fish are found at the back of the store. Ask the butcher to grind your beef from a cut of your choice. This ensures that you are truly buying ‘ground round’ or ‘ground chuck’. Otherwise, the butcher can create a product that may be composed of different cuts. This will also ensure that you will not get ground beef that has been purchased in bulk.

Also, check with the butcher as to the age of fish you buy and if it was previously frozen. You should not re-freeze fish, as it sees some breakdown with each time it is frozen.

Much shrimp is previously frozen. If you will not use it immediately, buy frozen fish and defrost just prior to use. By the way, shrimp is an excellent choice even for people with high blood cholesterol. The total fat and saturated fat are very low.

Bon appétit!