HEALTHY EATING WORKSHOP

Reading and Understanding Food Labels
Agenda

• Overview of basic strategy for healthy eating
• Packaged foods – how do you choose?
  • Back and front of package labeling
  • Government vs. non-government regulated labeling
• Put it into practice
• Wrap up
Objectives

After today’s workshop, you will:

1. Know where to find **reliable** information on food packaging
2. Understand how to **verify** information on the front of food labels
3. Be able to use information on food packaging to make **healthy and informed** food choices
Whole Foods

- Nothing added, nothing taken away
  - No unhealthy fat, sugar or salt added
  - No vitamins, minerals or fiber taken away

- Examples:
  - Fresh fruits/vegetables
  - Whole grains
  - Nuts, legumes, eggs
Whole vs. Processed: Fruits, Veggies, Proteins, Grains

Whole Foods
Healthiest

Processed Foods
Least Healthy
Dairy Foods

- **Healthiest**

Plain, low-fat milk and yogurt

- **Least Healthy**

Ice cream, butter, cheese
Packaged Foods – How Do You Choose?

What do you look at on a food label to help you make your choice?
Packaged Foods – How Do You Choose?

Back of the package:
- Most reliable
  - Ingredients list
  - Nutrition Facts label

Front of package:
- Lots of information
  - Nutrient content claims
  - Health claims
  - Seals and certifications
Back of Package Labeling
Back of the Package: Ingredient List

- Short, simple, readable
- Sound like food
- First ingredient is a healthy one (ingredients are listed from most to least, by weight). *Example*: “whole” should be the first ingredient in 100% whole wheat bread
- No partially hydrogenated oils
- Limited number of sugars:
  - Fructose, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, corn sweetener, sucrose, glucose, dextrose, brown sugar, honey, maple syrup, agave syrup, fruit juice concentrate, cane sugar, invert sugar, evaporated cane juice or molasses.
### Ingredient Lists – Test Your Knowledge

**Strawberry Flavored Apple Sauce**

**Ingredients:**
- APPLES,
- HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP,
- WATER,
- STRAWBERRY PUREE, NATURAL FLAVORS, ASCORBIC ACID (VITAMIN C),
- RED 40

**Natural Apple Sauce**

**Ingredients:**
- APPLES, WATER,
- ASCORBIC ACID (VITAMIN C)
Ingredient Lists – Test Your Knowledge

Strawberry Flavored Apple Sauce

Ingredients:
- APPLES,
- HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP,
- WATER,
- STRAWBERRY PUREE,
- NATURAL FLAVORS,
- ASCORBIC ACID (VITAMIN C),
- RED 40

Better choice!

Natural Apple Sauce

Ingredients:
- APPLES,
- WATER,
- ASCORBIC ACID (VITAMIN C)
Back of Package: Nutrition Facts Label

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

- Calories 250
- Calories from Fat 110

% Daily Value*

- Total Fat 12g 18%
- Saturated Fat 3g 15%
- Trans Fat 3g
- Cholesterol 30mg 10%
- Sodium 470mg 20%
- Total Carbohydrate 31g 10%
- Dietary Fiber 0g 0%
- Sugars 5g
- Protein 5g

Vitamin A 4%
Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 20%
Iron 4%
Check the serving size first

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrition Facts</th>
<th>Amount Per Serving</th>
<th>% Daily Value*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serving Size</td>
<td>1 cup (228g)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servings Per Container</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>Calories from Fat 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>12g</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>3g</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans Fat</td>
<td>3g</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>30mg</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>470mg</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate</td>
<td>31g</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>0g</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
<td>5g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>5g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin A</td>
<td>4g</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin C</td>
<td>2g</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>20g</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>4g</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Keep these LOW < 5%

Keep these HIGH > 20%
Front of Package – Government- Regulated Nutrient Content Claims

- Examples: “reduced sodium”, “low-fat”, “no added sugar”
- Quickly identify healthier options, e.g. reduced sodium canned foods, low-fat milk, etc.
# Front of Package – Government-Regulated Allergens

## Food allergy labeling
- Labeling required for foods containing most common food allergens
- Milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, soybeans.
- **Example:** "Contains Wheat, Milk, and Soy."

## Gluten-free labeling
- Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, rye, and some cross-breads
- **Approved terms:**
  - “Gluten-free”
  - “Free of gluten”
  - “No gluten”
  - “Without gluten”
Example:

“Three grams of soluble fiber from oatmeal in a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. This cereal has one gram per serving.”
Ingredients: Whole grain rolled oats, sugar, flavored fruit pieces (dehydrated apples treated with sodium sulfite to promote color retention), artificial strawberry flavor, citric acid, red 40), creaming agent (maltodextrin, vegetable oil [soybean and/or palm and/or coconut and/or canola and/or sunflower], whey, sodium caseinate, dipotassium phosphate), oat flour (whole), salt, calcium carbonate (a source of calcium), natural and artificial flavors, guar gum, citric acid, ferric phosphate (a source of iron), vitamin A palmitate, niacinamide, mixed tocopherols, pyridoxine hydrochloride (vitamin B6), riboflavin, thiamine mononitrate, folic acid.
**Ingredients list:** Whole grain rolled oats, sugar, flavored fruit pieces (dehydrated apples [treated with sodium sulfite to promote color retention], artificial strawberry flavor, citric acid, red 40), creaming agent (maltodextrin, vegetable oil [soybean and/or palm and/or coconut and/or canola and/or sunflower], whey, sodium caseinate, dipotassium phosphate), oat flour (whole), salt, calcium carbonate (a source of calcium), natural and artificial flavors, guar gum, citric acid, ferric phosphate (a source of iron), vitamin A palmitate, niacinamide, mixed tocopherols, pyridoxine hydrochloride (vitamin B6), riboflavin, thiamine mononitrate, folic acid.

- First ingredient is whole grain
- Added vitamins and minerals
- Second ingredient is sugar
- Long list
- Ingredients don’t sound like food
- Lots of artificial flavors and colors
- Added salt and oils
### Front of Package – Not Government-Regulated

**Other Claims**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>• Cereal box #1: Claim- “4 Simple Ingredients”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Hemp seed protein powder: Claim- “Organic Superfood”</td>
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</table>
Front of Package – Not Government-Regulated

Other claims

• Cereal box #1: Claim- “4 Simple Ingredients”
  ➢ Ingredients: Organic whole grain corn, organic dried cane syrup, salt, organic molasses

• Hemp seed protein powder: Claim- “Organic Superfood”
  ➢ The term “Superfood” is not defined by the FDA
Front of Package: Not Government-Regulated Seals and Certifications

- Value based, e.g. environmental, animal welfare, workers’ rights, etc.
- Many certified by non-governmental, third party certifier
- Exception: USDA organic is government certified
Front of Package: Not Government-Regulated

Seals and Certifications

- USDA Organic is government certified
  1. 100% Organic: 100% organic ingredients
  2. Organic: 95% organic ingredients
  3. Made with Organic Ingredients: 70% organic ingredients
Front of package: Not Government-Regulated
Seals and Certifications

- Value-based - choose what is important to you
- Visit certifier’s website to determine procedure for receiving seal

**Examples:**

- [Non-GMO Project Verified](https://nongmoproject.org)
- [Fair Trade Certified](https://fairtrade.org)
- [Rainforest Alliance Certified](https://rainforestalliance.org)
Reading and Understanding Food Labels

• Read ingredient lists and Nutrition Facts labels
  • Choose short list of ingredients
  • Make sure first ingredient is a healthy one
  • Look for low sodium, sugars, saturated and trans fat
  • Use to compare foods within same category

• Don’t rely solely on front of package claims. Verify against information on back of package (i.e. ingredient list and Nutrition Facts label)

• Prioritize values and research third party certifiers
Let’s Practice: Compare two canned beans options

- Use the Nutrition Facts labels to complete the chart below.
- Which canned beans option is healthier and why?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Fiber</th>
<th>Protein</th>
<th>Sodium</th>
<th>% DV Sodium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Let’s Practice: Compare two canned beans options

- A and B have the same amount of calories, fiber and protein per serving.
- But, option A has over three times more sodium than option B.

- **Option B is the healthier choice and is labeled as low-sodium.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Fiber</th>
<th>Protein</th>
<th>Sodium</th>
<th>% DV Sodium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>6 grams</td>
<td>8 grams</td>
<td>410 mg</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>6 grams</td>
<td>8 grams</td>
<td>135 mg</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resources

Visit [nyc.gov/Health](http://nyc.gov/Health)

1. Search for “healthy eating”
   - Healthy Eating and Active Living Guide
   - Recipes and other handouts (Plate Planners)

2. Search for “farmers markets” to find local produce
   - Text “SoGood” to 877877 to find your nearest farmers market
   - Onsite education available at select markets

Visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov)
Plan for the future

Name one way you will use the information you gained today on your next food shopping trip.
Thanks for Attending!