Science a-z
QUICK READ

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Reading Nutrition Labels

Do you know what's in the food you're eating? Most cereals, juices, and other packaged foods have a Nutrition Facts label like the one on this page. Reading the label can help you understand how the food fits into a healthy diet.

The first item listed is *Serving Size* Ⓐ—how much to eat or drink in one meal or snack. All the numbers on this food label apply to 1/4 cup (30g) of Trek Mix. Under *Amount Per Serving*, Ⓑ you'll find the calories in one serving as well as how many are from fat. One serving of Trek Mix contains 150 calories, 80 of which come from fat. If you eat two servings of a food, you get *twice* the calories and nutrients.

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Next is a section between two dark lines. Ⓒ The bold print lists five main categories of information: *Total Fat*, *Cholesterol*, *Sodium* (salt), *Total Carbohydrate*, and *Protein*. Check the types of fats; research has linked trans fat and saturated fat to heart disease and other illnesses. Now look at the types of carbohydrates, keeping in mind that dietary fiber has many health benefits, while sugars are less healthy.

The Nutrition Facts label also lists the amount of vitamins and minerals Ⓓ in one serving. (Trek Mix contains small amounts of iron, calcium, and vitamin C.) Below this information, the ingredients are listed in order from highest proportion to least. (Trek Mix has more almonds than cashews.)

Compare this label with labels on your favorite foods. Food labels can help you make wise choices about what you eat.

Nutrition Facts

Ⓐ Serving Size 1/4 cup (30g)
Servings per Container about 15

Ⓑ **Amount Per Serving**
Calories 150 Calories from Fat 80

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 9g	14%
Saturated Fat 1g	6%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 6g	
Ⓒ Monounsaturated Fat 2g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 15mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 13g	4%
Dietary Fiber 2g	9%
Sugars 6g	
Protein 5g	

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 4% • Iron 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
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

INGREDIENTS: Almonds (Almonds, Canola Oil, Salt), Cranberries (Cranberries, Sugar, Sunflower Oil), Cashews (Cashews, Canola Oil, Salt).

Our vendors follow Good Manufacturing Practices to segregate ingredients to avoid cross contact with allergens. Made on equipment shared with wheat, milk, peanuts, other tree nuts and soy.

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Brain Check

- ❏ What is the main purpose of a Nutrition Facts food label?
- ❏ What kinds of fats are better and worse for you?
- ❏ What kinds of carbohydrates are better and worse for you?

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