

Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

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Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

National Health Education Standards: www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sher/standards/index.htm



Grades 6 to 8 • Personal Health Series

Food Labels

Food companies spend a lot of time and money convincing people to buy their products. Because it's so easy to fall for misleading claims on the packaging, it's important for students to learn to think critically about what's inside the packaging. The Nutrition Facts food label can help them do that. These activities will help your students learn to use food labels to make healthier dietary choices.

Related KidsHealth Links

Articles for Kids:

Figuring Out Food Labels

KidsHealth.org/en/kids/labels.html

Learning About Calories

KidsHealth.org/en/kids/calorie.html

Learning About Fats

KidsHealth.org/en/kids/fat.html

Learning About Proteins

KidsHealth.org/en/kids/protein.html

Learning About Carbohydrates

KidsHealth.org/en/kids/carb.html

Vitamins

KidsHealth.org/en/kids/vitamin.html

Minerals

KidsHealth.org/en/kids/minerals.html

Articles for Teens:

Food Labels

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/food-labels.html

Figuring Out Fat and Calories

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/fat-calories.html

Cholesterol

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/cholesterol.html

Vitamins and Minerals

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/vitamins-minerals.html

Calcium

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/calcium.html

Vitamin D

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/vitaminD.html

Fiber

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/fiber.html

Smart Supermarket Shopping

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/grocery-shopping.html

Discussion Questions

Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

1. Where do you see Nutrition Facts food labels? How often do you read them? What information do you look for?
2. Unless you grow all of your own food, you probably eat food that's been processed. What does "processed" mean? Why do you think fresh foods are more nutritious than processed foods?
3. Does it make a difference what people order in restaurants when nutrition information is on the menu? Does it make a difference to you?
4. While food labels are helpful to everyone, why are they necessary for people with food allergies or certain health problems, like diabetes or heart disease?



Activities for Students

Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

Fast-Food Freddy

Objectives:

Students will:

- Use Nutrition Facts food labels or search online to find out how much fat and sugar is in a typical fast food meal
- Examine why too much fast food can contribute to health problems
- Identify ways to make healthier food choices

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access, "Fast-Food Freddy" handout
- Nutrition labels from fast foods (students may use actual packaging or research the labels online)

Class Time:

- 1 hour

Activity:

You are Fresh-Food Frankie, and your cousin Fast-Food Freddy just visited, and boy, does he live up to his nickname. Breakfast burritos, hash browns, double cheeseburgers, fried chicken, onion rings, tacos, French fries, soft drinks, shakes ... you name it. He says he gets all the fruit he needs from apple pies and that fries are technically a vegetable! Fortunately, you know better. After reading the articles at KidsHealth.org, write a letter to Freddie explaining why eating so much fast food is not healthy. Be sure to include:

- a comparison of the calories, fat, and carbohydrate in at least two of his meal choices
- a discussion of fast food portion sizes
- how Freddy's eating habits might hurt his health
- suggestions to help Freddy choose healthier options

Extensions:

1. Discuss the ways fast-food restaurants target kids and teens. Do you think they're they successful?
2. Using shortening to represent fat (**4 grams of shortening equals 1 teaspoon**), demonstrate for the class how much fat is in one of Fast-Food Freddy's favorite meals.
3. Fast food often has a lot of trans fats, as do many packaged snack foods. Research why trans fats are so dangerous, and how to spot them on an ingredient list.



See Through the Label

Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn how to read food labels
- Determine if packaged food is healthy

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Pen or pencil, paper, paperclip or stapler
- Two food labels (students may use actual packaging or research the labels online)

Class Time:

- 1 hour

Activity:

Walk down any grocery aisle, and you'll see food packages making all kinds of claims. Fat free! Lite! Low carb! But does that necessarily mean these products are healthy for you? First, check out the KidsHealth.org articles to learn how to read Nutrition Facts food labels, what they mean, and how to make healthy choices about food products. Next, choose two foods that are marketed to kids or teens and examine the labels. Based on your research, are these products healthy? For each food label, write a paragraph explaining your findings. Attach the food labels to your paper to support your conclusions.

Extension:

Keep track of the food you eat for one day. At the end of the day, think about what influenced your food choices for that day — your parents, the school menu, advertising, food packaging, convenience, etc. Were the choices you made healthy choices? How can you make healthy choices every day?

Reproducible Materials

Handout: Fast-Food Freddy

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/nutrition/food_labels_handout1.pdf

Quiz: Food Labels

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/nutrition/food_labels_quiz.pdf

Answer Key: Food Labels


KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/nutrition/food_labels_quiz_answers.pdf

Instructions: You are Fresh-Food Frankie, writing a letter to your cousin Fast-Food Freddy, who eats nothing but fast food. Explain why eating so much fast food is not healthy. Be sure to:

- compare the calories, fat, and carbohydrate in at least two of his meal choices
- discuss fast-food portion sizes
- explain how Freddy's eating habits might hurt his health and energy levels
- suggest ways Freddy can improve his diet



Dear Freddy:





Name: _____

Date: _____

*Your cousin,
Frankie*



Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question.

1. Nutrition Facts food labels usually list three kinds of fats: _____, _____, and _____.
2. A food is considered to be an excellent source of a nutrient if the percent daily value of that nutrient is:
 - a. 0%
 - b. less than 5%
 - c. between 10% and 19%
 - d. 20% or more
3. True or false: Because food labels are written according to the calorie needs of adults, they are not useful for kids and teens.
4. The food label of your favorite snack says the serving size is 1 cup, there are 120 calories per serving, and there are 2.5 servings per container. How many calories are in the entire container?
 - a. 120
 - b. 240
 - c. 300
 - d. 360
5. About _____% of all the calories you eat in a day should come from fat.



Quiz Answer Key

1. Nutrition Facts food labels usually list three kinds of fats: _____ *saturated* _____, _____ *unsaturated* _____, and _____ *trans fat* _____.
2. A food is considered to be an excellent source of a nutrient if the percent daily value of that nutrient is:
 - a. 0%
 - b. less than 5%
 - c. between 10% and 19%
 - d. 20% or more
3. True or false: Because food labels are written according to the calorie needs of adults, they are not useful for kids and teens.
4. The food label of your favorite snack says the serving size is 1 cup, there are 120 calories per serving, and there are 2.5 servings per container. How many calories are in the entire container?
 - a. 120
 - b. 240
 - c. 300
 - d. 360
5. About _____ 30 _____% of all the calories you eat in a day should come from fat.