

UNDERSTANDING FOOD LABEL TO STRENGTHEN YOUR BONES



Reading food labels is essential for making nutritional choices that support strong and healthy bones. Understanding what you eat, can help you to choose the best foods for your goal.

WHAT NUTRIENTS SHOULD I BE LOOKING FOR?

There are **12 mandatory nutrients** that need to be on the table facts like:

Calcium: essential for building and maintaining bone.

Protein: helps maintain and repair bone tissue.

Extra nutrients may also be shown, but they are **not legally required**, such as:

Vitamin D: helps our body absorb calcium.

Magnesium: helps calcium use and converts vitamin D into its active form.

Vitamin K: helps to bind calcium to bone.

Choose foods that offer **15% or more** of the Daily Value (DV) for key nutrients to help meet your nutritional needs.

DID YOU KNOW?

Limit sodium intake to reduce calcium loss through urine. Choose foods with **5% or less** of the Daily Value (DV) for sodium, or select products with the **lowest sodium % when comparing** options.

Nutrient content claims provide vital information about specific nutrients in foods. They help you choose beneficial options, such as "**Good source of calcium**," and identify choices with reduced nutrients, such as "**Low sodium**."

Some products **should be fortified with vitamin D**, such as **milk and margarine**. Additionally, other products may **voluntarily** have this vitamin added, like **yogurt, lact-based milk, and orange juice**. These additions play a vital role by helping the body absorb calcium.

USING NUTRITION FACTS TO DETERMINE FOOD'S NUTRITIONAL VALUE & COMPARE SIMILAR PRODUCTS

1. Look at the portion size:

The nutritional information on the label is based on a specific amount. If you consume a different amount, calculate the corresponding values.

2. Scan key nutrients for bone health:

Some key nutrients for bone health may not appear on nutrition labels. But don't worry! You can still use available information to make smart choices.

Nutrition Facts Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (250 mL) pour 1 tasse (250 mL)	
Calories 110	% Daily Value* % valeur quotidienne*
Fat / Lipides 0 g	0 %
Saturated / saturés 0 g + Trans / trans 0 g	0 %
Carbohydrate / Glucides 26 g	
Fibre / Fibres 0 g	0 %
Sugars / Sucres 22 g	22 %
Protein / Protéines 2 g	
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium 0 mg	0 %
Potassium 450 mg	13 %
Calcium 30 mg	2 %
Iron / Fer 0 mg	0 %

*5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot
*5 % ou moins c'est peu, 15 % ou plus c'est beaucoup

3. Check out % of Daily values (DV):

Shows how much of a nutrient is in a serving compared to the recommended daily intake.

4. Compare foods: using the same portion size to compare the %DV of key nutrients.

Product A

Nutrition Facts Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (250 mL) pour 1 tasse (250 mL)	
Calories 35	% Daily Value* % valeur quotidienne*
Fat / Lipides 3 g	4 %
Saturated / saturés 0.3 g + Trans / trans 0 g	2 %
Polyunsaturated / polyinsaturés 0.8 g Monounsaturated / monoinsaturés 1.5 g	
Carbohydrate / Glucides 1 g	
Fibre / Fibres 1 g	4 %
Sugars / Sucres 0 g	0 %
Protein / Protéines 1 g	
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium 150 mg	7 %
Potassium 40 mg	1 %
Calcium 300 mg	23 %
Iron / Fer 0.4 mg	2 %

Product B

Nutrition Facts Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (250 mL) pour 1 tasse (250 mL)	
Calories 40	% Daily Value* % valeur quotidienne*
Fat / Lipides 3 g	4 %
Saturated / saturés 0.3 g + Trans / trans 0 g	2 %
Carbohydrate / Glucides 1 g	
Fibre / Fibres 1 g	4 %
Sugars / Sucres 0 g	0 %
Protein / Protéines 1 g	
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium 150 mg	7 %
Potassium 40 mg	1 %
Calcium 400 mg	30 %
Iron / Fer 0.2 mg	1 %

Product B is the better choice because it contains more calcium, while both products have the same %DV of sodium.

References:

National Osteoporosis Foundation. https://www.bonehealthandosteoporosis.org/wp-content/uploads/BoningUpBrochure_8.5x11.pdf

Canadian Food Inspection Agency. <https://inspection.canada.ca/en/food-labels/labelling/consumers>