

Let the Nutrition Facts Work for You!

If you have diabetes, you probably know that eating healthfully is key to managing your condition. A registered dietitian or certified diabetes educator can help you make a flexible eating plan that meets your treatment goals (exercise, diet and medication), lifestyle needs and food tastes. Whether the plan is based on *Exchange Lists for Meal Planning* (a system developed by the American Diabetes and American Dietetic Associations), carbohydrate counting or USDA's MyPyramid, you'll need information about your food choices to put it into practice. Food labels can help you get started!

Look for the Facts!

Pick up almost any packaged food and find a Nutrition Facts label. (See sample.) Look for these "facts" that can make planning meals and snacks easier:

♦ **Serving Size** – How much you eat matters when you're managing diabetes. Eating too much or too little can affect your blood sugar and your weight. That's why it's important to be aware of portion sizes. Notice that for some foods, the label serving size differs from a food Pyramid serving or one exchange list serving. For example, the label serving for prepared hot cereal is one cup – the amount most people say they eat. If you eat one cup, count that as two 1-ounce servings from MyPyramid's *Grains Group* or as two *Starch* exchanges. For other foods, such as milk, serving sizes match: one cup (8 oz.) of milk is a food label serving; it also counts as one cup from MyPyramid's *Milk Group* or as one *Milk* exchange. Knowing "what counts as a serving" helps you learn how foods fit into your eating plan.

♦ **Calories** – Calories count! Aiming for the daily calorie target your health



Lemon Berry Parfait

professional recommends helps you work toward or stay at a body weight that's right for you. The Nutrition Facts label lists the number of calories in one serving, so you can compare similar types of food and make choices. To hold the line on calories: watch portion sizes, try some light, low calorie or reduced calorie versions of favorite foods and be physically active, too.

♦ **Fat and Saturated Fat** – It's wise to keep your fat (especially saturated fat) intake within the limits set for your eating plan. Keeping your fat intake in check can help you control calories and body weight. Diets rich in whole-grain

foods and other plant foods, and low in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart disease and certain cancers. Check the label for the amount of fat and saturated fat in foods and, over the course of the day, balance higher fat foods with lower fat and fat free choices.

♦ **Total Carbohydrate** – Carbohydrates break down to glucose. Glucose travels through the body as *blood sugar* and relies on the hormone *insulin* to let it enter cells, so it can be used for energy. If you have diabetes, your body either does not produce enough insulin or is not able to use it properly, so you need to control the amount of carbohydrate you eat. Look for the total amount of carbohydrate in a serving of food on the Nutrition Facts label. This information helps with carbohydrate counting or for figuring out how various foods fit into diabetic exchanges. Whichever system you use, the goal is to distribute the amount of carbohydrate you eat among each of your meals and snacks, instead of eating it all at one time. To get the most from your carbohydrate choices, be sure to include some fiber-rich whole grains, vegetables and fruits each day.

Fat Free Milk With Vitamins A & D			
Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 cup (240 ml)			
Servings Per Container 4			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories	90	Calories from Fat	0
		%Daily Value*	
Total Fat	0g		0%
Saturated Fat	0g		0%
Trans Fat	0g		
Cholesterol	5mg		2%
Sodium	130mg		5%
Total Carbohydrate	13g		4%
Dietary Fiber	0g		0%
Sugars	12g		
Protein	9g		
Vitamin A 10% • Vitamin C 2% • Calcium 30%			
Iron 0% • Vitamin D 25%			
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 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
Saturated 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: PASTEURIZED, HOMOGENIZED GRADE A FAT FREE MILK WITH 2000 I.U. VITAMIN A PALMITATE AND 400 I.U. VITAMIN D3 ADDED PER QUART.

◆ **Percent Daily Value** – Daily Values are recommended daily amounts based on current health recommendations for key nutrients such as fat, sodium, fiber, calcium and vitamin C. The Percent Daily Value (% Daily Value) on the Nutrition Facts label gives you an idea of a food's nutrient contributions to a 2000-calorie diet. For some nutrients, such as fat and sodium, aim to eat no more than 100%; for fiber and vitamins and minerals, such as calcium, aim to eat at least 100%. Remember, % Daily Value applies to your overall eating plan. Experts urge eating a variety of foods each day since no one food provides all the nutrients needed for health.

Other Label Helpers

Food labels also offer other information you can use when choosing foods to fit into your healthful eating plan. Here are two examples:

◆ **Ingredient Statement** – You'll find a complete list of ingredients, in descending order by weight, on all packaged foods with more than one ingredient. This list helps you identify ingredients that are of interest to you for health, religious or other reasons. Let's say you want to eat some whole-grain foods but aren't sure how to choose them. A tip is to check the ingredient list: look for whole grains, such as *whole wheat*, *graham flour*, *whole-grain corn*, *whole oats* or *brown rice*, as the first ingredient.

◆ **Nutrient Content Claims** – Nutrient content claims are words or phrases that give a general idea of the amount of a particular nutrient in a serving of food. Examples are *excellent source of calcium*, *good source of dietary fiber*, *reduced fat*, *sugar free* or *low sodium*. Government rules specify which nutrient content claims are allowed, what each one means and when each may be used. Thus, nutrient content claims mean the same thing for every similar product on which they appear. For instance, the term *sugar free* means that a food contains less than a half gram of sugars per label serving and per reference amount (a standard portion set by the government for each type of food). Choosing some sugar free foods and beverages may give you flexibility to add more grains, fruits or vegetables to your diet. Nutrient content claims highlight specific nutrients, so check the Nutrition Facts for complete nutrition information.

Recommended Reading

Ask your dietitian or other healthcare team member for advice about how food labels can help you make choices that fit into your meal plan. While it does take time to read labels, healthful eating is worth the effort – it can help you manage your diabetes. Get the facts: read food labels!



Check the nutrition information so you can determine how these tasty treats fit into your healthful eating plan.

Lemon Berry Parfait

Prep time: 10 minutes plus refrigerating

- 12 SNACKWELL'S® Sugar Free Lemon Creme Sandwich Cookies, divided
- 2 cups cold fat free milk
- 1 package (4-serving size) JELL-O® Vanilla Flavor Fat Free Sugar Free Reduced Calorie Instant Pudding & Pie Filling
- 1/2 cup thawed COOL WHIP® LITE Whipped Topping
- 1 cup blueberries, divided

CHOP 9 cookies; halve remaining 3 cookies and reserve for garnish.

POUR cold milk into large bowl. Add pudding mix. Beat with wire whisk 2 minutes. Gently stir in whipped topping.

SPOON about 1 tablespoon each chopped cookies and blueberries into 6 dessert dishes. Top with about 3 tablespoons pudding mixture. Repeat layers. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Garnish with reserved cookie halves before serving.

Makes 6 servings.

Great Substitute: Substitute fresh raspberries for blueberries.

A Taste of Nutrition: Layer up cookies, fruit and pudding for an elegant dessert idea. The milk in the pudding provides a good source of calcium.

Nutrition Information Per Serving: 160 calories, 5g total fat, 1.5g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 360mg sodium, 29g carbohydrate, 1g dietary fiber, 7g sugars, 4g protein, 4% daily value vitamin A, 6% daily value vitamin C, 10% daily value calcium, 2% daily value iron.

Exchange: 2 Carbohydrate, 1/2 Fat

Frozen Shortbread Treats

Prep time: 10 minutes plus freezing

- 1 cup thawed COOL WHIP® LITE Whipped Topping
- 16 SNACKWELL'S® Sugar Free Shortbread Cookies

SPREAD 2 tablespoons whipped topping on each of 8 cookies. Cover with remaining cookies; press together lightly to make sandwiches.

FREEZE 4 hours or overnight. Wrap individually. Store in freezer for up to 3 days.

Makes 8 treats.

A Taste of Nutrition: Looking to satisfy your sweet tooth? Enjoy one of these frozen treats as part of your healthful eating plan.

Nutrition Information Per Serving: 110 calories, 5g total fat, 2g saturated fat, <5mg cholesterol, 105mg sodium, 17g carbohydrate, 0g dietary fiber, 2g sugars, 1g protein, 0% daily value vitamin A, 0% daily value vitamin C, 0% daily value calcium, 4% daily value iron.

Exchange: 1 Carbohydrate, 1 Fat

This Fact Sheet provides general nutrition information. For personal dietary advice, consult a health professional.