

A Guide to Food Labelling for People with Diabetes (Page 1 of 2)

If you have diabetes, watching what you eat is very important. This information sheet is designed to help you to understand what food labels mean and to help you to choose healthier foods.

Ingredients are listed in order of weight, the main ingredient first.

Baked Beans in Tomato Sauce 220g
 Ingredients: Beans, water, tomato puree, sugar, modified starch, salt, onion, spices.

Nutrition information tells you how much of the most important nutrients a food contains. Values are given 'per 100 g' and 'amount per serving'.

Nutrition Information: Typical values per 100g

Energy	362kJ (85Kcal)
Protein	4.9g
Carbohydrate	15.5g
(of which sugars)	(6.3)
Fat	0.4g
(of which saturates)	(0.1g)
Fibre	5.2g
Sodium	0.5g

Energy

Food energy in food is measured in calories (Kcal) or kilojoules (kJ).

Carbohydrate

Carbohydrate is the starch and the sugar content of the food. Many labels also tell you how much of the carbohydrate is from sugars.

Sugars

This includes both added sugars and natural sugars (e.g. fruit sugar). There are lots of claims made about sugar. **Reduced sugar** foods must contain 25% (1/4) less sugar than their standard equivalent, but may still be high in sugar. **No added sugar** means that no sugar has been added, but not necessarily that a food is sugar free. **Low sugar** foods must contain less than 5g sugar per 100g. **Sugar free** foods must contain less than 0.2 g sugar per 100 g. There is no need to cut out all foods containing sugar. Instead it is best to limit high sugar foods, and replace them with foods that are low in sugar.

**Produced by the Nutrition and Dietetic Department
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If you need this information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact the Patient Information Co-ordinator on 01722 336262 ext. 4401 fax: 01722 425037 email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk

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Fat

Eating too much fat is linked with a greater risk of heart disease and can contribute to weight gain. Check how much fat a food contains, and whether the fat is saturated or unsaturated. **Saturated fats** raise blood cholesterol (fat), and are found in meat, dairy products, pastries, cakes and biscuits. **Poly- and mono-unsaturated fats** help to lower blood cholesterol, and are found in oily fish, sunflower, corn and olive oils. Look for foods that are low in fat. Check 'reduced fat' claims carefully – these can contain a lot of sugar and energy (calories).

Fibre

High fibre foods are filling, without giving too many calories, and help control blood glucose (sugar) levels. Fibre is found in fruit, vegetables, pulses, wholegrain bread and cereals.

Sodium

Sodium on a food label refers to the salt content. Eating too much salt can cause high blood pressure, increasing your risk of stroke and heart disease. Many processed foods contain a lot of hidden salt. It is best not to have more than 6 g of salt (2.4 g of sodium) a day.

How much is a lot or a little?

The guide below should help you decide whether a food or drink contains a lot, some, or just a little of sugar, fat, fibre or sodium (salt). Look at the nutrition information box. This should show how much per 100g the food contains, so that you can compare it with the table below:

	A lot	Some	A little
Sugars	10.0g	5.0g	2.0g
Fat	20.0g	10.g	3.0g
Saturates	5.0g	3.0g	1.0g
Fibre	3.0g	2.0g	0.5g
Sodium	0.5g	0.3g	0.1g

Guideline Daily Amounts

Guideline Daily Amounts are provided on some food labels as a guide to adults of the amount of food energy, fat and sugar to eat on average each day as a part of a healthy diet. If you are overweight, you will need to eat fewer calories (kcal) and if possible increase the amount of activity you do to use up more calories. Diabetes UK recommends that up to 10 % of daily energy intake can come from added sugar provided this is eaten as part of a healthy balanced diet and your sugar intake is spread throughout the day.

	Men	Women
Energy	2500 kcal	2000 kcal
Fat	95 g	70 g
Sugar	70 g	50 g

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