

Healthy Eating Research Guidelines

We recognize that experiencing food insecurity can include barriers to good health and so, by implementing the **Healthy Eating Research Guidelines(HER)**, we will provide everyone, especially those experiencing or at risk of diet-related diseases, with access to the nutritious and culturally relevant foods we all deserve.

- The HER Guidelines uses a color-coding system to rank foods based on their nutritional quality, where “**Green foods**” are the most nutrient dense and “**Red foods**” are the least nutrient dense.
- As we continue providing Food for Better Lives, partners can now select food, via SCA, utilizing the HER Guidelines and the Nutrition Facts Label.
- Disclaimer: Ranking foods is not synonymous to labeling food items as “good” or “bad”, but instead, increases knowledge and awareness about nutrition in foods.



How to Read a Nutrition Facts Label

- **Serving Information:** The serving size is the amount that people typically eat or drink. It is not a recommendation of how much you should eat or drink. All the nutrient amounts shown on the label refer to the size of the serving.
- **Calories:** a measure of how much energy you get from one serving of this food.
- **Percent Daily Value:** the percentage of the Daily Value for each nutrient in one serving of this food. These are reference amounts of nutrients to consume or not to exceed each day.
- The %DV helps you determine if a serving of food is high or low in a nutrient.
- Nutrients to get less of: saturated fat, sodium(salt), and added sugars
- Suggestion: Use the Nutrition Facts Label to categorize and display the food items in your pantries in accordance with the HER Guidelines.

Serving
Information

Calories

Nutrients

Nutrition Facts		
8 servings per container		
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)		
Amount per serving		
Calories	230	
% Daily Value*		
Total Fat 8g		10%
Saturated Fat 1g		5%
Trans Fat 0g		
Cholesterol 0mg		0%
Sodium 160mg		7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g		13%
Dietary Fiber 4g		14%
Total Sugars 12g		
Includes 10g Added Sugars		20%
Protein 3g		
Vitamin D 2mcg		10%
Calcium 260mg		20%
Iron 8mg		45%
Potassium 240mg		6%
*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.		

Quick guide to
percent Daily
Value (%DV)

5% of less is low

20% or more
is high

www.fda.gov/food/new-nutrition-facts-label/how-understand-and-use-nutrition-facts-label



THE “OFTEN” FOODS

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables with NO added sugar or sodium(salt)
- Low-sodium(salt) vegetables
- Fruit canned in 100% juice or in water

GRAINS

- Whole Grains
- Whole wheat pasta/breads
- Whole grain cereal with less than 6 grams of added sugar
- Plain oatmeal

PROTEIN

- Dried beans
- Low-sodium(salt) canned beans
- Nuts
- Fresh/Frozen poultry
- Fish
- Low-sodium(salt) canned tuna
- Canned salmon

DAIRY

- Skim, 1%, 2% milk
- Fat-free and reduced fat cheeses

BEVERAGES

- Plain water
- Flavored and unflavored sparkling water
- Plain coffee
- Unsweetened tea

RULE OF THUMB*

Saturated Fat ≤2 g
Sodium(salt) ≤230 mg
Added Sugar ≤6 g

*Some variation may exist between food groups
(i.e. fruits/vegetables, protein, grains, dairy, etc.)*

THE “SOMETIMES” FOODS

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- 100% juice
- Fruit canned in light syrup
- Canned vegetables
- Plain dried fruit

GRAINS

- Refined grain products
- Oatmeal with added sugar
- Whole or non-whole grain cereal with 7-11 grams of total added sugar

PROTEIN

- Canned beans
- Regular canned fish
- Pork

DAIRY

- Some reduced fat or whole milk cheeses
- Whole Milk

BEVERAGES

- Diet soft drinks
- Diet iced teas

PROCESSED/ PACKAGED SNACKS

- Plain popcorn
- Whole wheat crackers
- Unsalted whole grain pretzels

RULE OF THUMB*

Saturated Fat ≤2.5 g
Sodium(salt) 231 - 479 mg
Added Sugar 7-11 g

*Some variation may exist between food groups
(i.e. fruits/vegetables, protein, grains, dairy, etc.)*

THE “RARELY” FOODS

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Dried fruit with sugar added
- Fruit canned in heavy syrup
- Tomato sauce with added sugar
- Vegetables canned with high sodium(salt)

GRAINS

- Rice and pasta with salt-based seasoning mixes
- Whole or non-whole grain cereal with greater than 12 grams of sugar
- Most bakery items

PROTEIN

- Refried beans
- Deli meat
- Sausage
- Bacon
- Most red meat

DAIRY

- Full-fat cheese

BEVERAGES

- Sweetened energy drinks
- Sports drinks
- Regular sodas
- Non-100% juice drinks with added sugar
- Processed/ packaged snacks
- Pretzels
- Cheese crackers
- Potato chips

RULE OF THUMB*

Saturated Fat ≤2.5 g
Sodium(salt) ≥480 mg
Added Sugar ≥12 g

*Some variation may exist between food groups
(i.e. fruits/vegetables, protein, grains, dairy, etc.)*