



Pocket Guide to Understanding the Food Nutrition Facts Label

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of this guide is to **help you read labels and make the best food choices for your kidneys.**

Purchased foods come in different forms. As an example, tomatoes can be bought fresh or made into a sauce, soup, condiment, or juice.

When foods are processed, they often contain added ingredients. Any packaged item has a food label. It is important to read food labels to be aware of added ingredients that may impact your health.



In this guide we cover **important nutrients to watch as part of your diet with kidney disease.**

FOOD LABEL

Food labels on packaged foods include a **Nutrition Facts table** and a **list of ingredients**.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 4 pieces (76g)	
Servings Per Container About 9	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 170	Calories from Fat 90
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 9g	15%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 20mg	7%
Sodium 370mg	15%
Total Carbohydrate 15g	5%
Dietary Fiber < 1g	4%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 8g	13%
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 2%	Iron 4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 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
Sat 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
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

INGREDIENTS: BONELESS SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST WITH RIB MEAT, WATER, WHEAT FLOUR, YELLOW CORN FLOUR, ISOLATED SOY PROTEIN. **CONTAINS 2% OR LESS OF THE FOLLOWING:** SEA SALT, CORN STARCH, DISTILLED VINEGAR, MALTED BARLEY FLOUR, SUGAR, SODIUM BICARBONATE, YEAST, CANOLA OIL, SPICES, GARLIC POWDER, GUAR GUM, NATURAL FLAVOR, FLAX MEAL, EXTRACTIVE OF

SERVING SIZE

Serving size is at the top of the Nutrition Facts table.



This is the quantity used to determine the numbers in the table. **BEWARE:** the serving size may not be the quantity you should be eating.

DO THE MATH: if you usually eat twice the serving size, you will have to double the numbers written on the food label: 160 mg (milligrams) of sodium would therefore become 320 mg.



Nutrition Facts	
about 9 servings per container	
Serving size 6 crackers (28g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	120
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 3.5g	4%
Saturated Fat 0g	
Trans Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 20g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Total Sugars 0g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 10mg	0%
Iron 1.4mg	0%

When comparing different products, don't forget to compare serving sizes! E.g., you need to compare the Nutrition Facts of 1 cup of product A with 1 cup of product B.

SODIUM

Choose foods with **less than 200 mg** (milligrams) per serving or up to 600 mg for a meal type item.

A diet high in sodium (salt) can increase blood pressure, cause your body to keep more fluid, and can also make you feel thirsty.

Nutrition Facts	
1 Servings Per Container	
Serving size	1 muffin, 6oz (170g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	620
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 31g	40%
Saturated Fat 6g	30%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 125mg	42%
Sodium 420mg	18%
Total Carbohydrate 77g	28%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 43g	
Includes 40g Added Sugars	80%
Protein 9g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 46mg	4%
Iron 1mg	0%
Potassium 44mg	0%

*The % Daily Value 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.

Just because foods do not taste salty does not mean they are low in sodium. For example, baked goods are often high in sodium.

Processed foods often contain added sodium. This is the biggest contributor of dietary sodium to our diets.

PHOSPHORUS

Phosphorus is a mineral needed for bone health but too much can be harmful with kidney disease.

Avoid foods with phosphorus additives because they are so easily absorbed.

Phosphorus is not often in the Nutrition Facts label but that does not mean the food does not contain phosphorus.

Look for hidden phosphorus as a food additive (“phos”) in the ingredients.



INGREDIENTS: ENRICHED MACARONI (WHEAT FLOUR, DURUM FLOUR, NIACIN, FERROUS SULFATE [IRON], THIAMIN MONONITRATE [VITAMIN B1], RIBOFLAVIN [VITAMIN B2], FOLIC ACID), CHEESE SAUCE MIX (WHEY, MILKFAT, SALT, MILK PROTEIN CONCENTRATE, **SODIUM TRIPHOSPHATE**, CONTAINS LESS THAN 2% OF TAPIOCA FLOUR, CITRIC ACID, LACTIC ACID, **SODIUM PHOSPHATE**, **CALCIUM PHOSPHATE**, WITH PAPRIKA, TURMERIC, AND ANNATTO ADDED FOR COLOR, ENZYMES, CHEESE CULTURE).

ORGANIC PHOSPHORUS

is naturally found in animal and plant-based foods. This type of phosphorus is not found on food labels and is only 40 to 60% absorbed.

INORGANIC PHOSPHORUS

is added when foods are processed. Foods with phosphate additives should be limited because almost 100% is absorbed.

POTASSIUM

Potassium* is a mineral that is essential for heart health but too much of it can be dangerous for people with kidney disease.

Each person's kidney diet is individualized. You may need to limit potassium while others may not.

Vitamin D 0mcg	0%	Calcium 50mg	4%
Iron 1.1mg	6%	Potassium 1250mg	25%
Vitamin A 260mcg	30%	Vitamin C 100mg	110%

* 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.

INGREDIENTS: VEGETABLE JUICE (WATER AND CONCENTRATED JUICES OF TOMATOES, CARROTS, CELERY, BEETS, PARSLEY, LETTUCE, WATERCRESS, SPINACH), POTASSIUM CHLORIDE, SALT, VITAMIN C, CALCIUM LACTATE

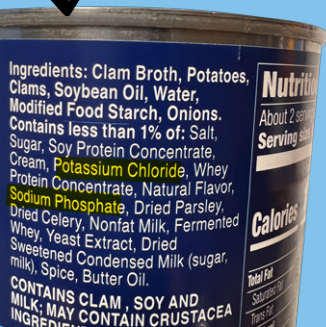
If you are limiting potassium in your diet, **choose foods with less than 200 mg** per serving or up to 600 mg for a meal type item. Compare similar products side by side and choose the lower potassium food.

CAUTION: All food labels contain % DV (Daily Value) for potassium. Foods with less than 2% DV may be listed as 0 mg of potassium per serving. This does not mean the food contains no potassium. In fact, it may contain up to 93 mg of potassium per serving and add up quickly depending on the portion you eat.

* For more information visit the AAKP's "Are You O-K+" campaign in recognition of National High Potassium Awareness Day (every May 1st). www.areyouok.org

LIST OF INGREDIENTS & ADDITIVES

Many phosphorus and potassium additives can be found in processed foods. **Reading the ingredient list can help to find foods with these additives.**



Ingredients in foods are listed in the order of their total amount. Ingredients first on the list are found in higher amounts than ingredients listed last.

Try to limit **PHOSPHORUS ADDITIVES**. Avoid ingredients containing “phos” in their name, such as phosphoric acid, sodium phosphate, etc.

Try to limit eating foods with **POTASSIUM ADDITIVES**. As part of a low potassium diet, avoid ingredients containing the word “potassium”, such as potassium lactate, potassium chloride and potassium phosphate. All foods should include the amount of potassium per serving on the label.

SUGAR & FIBER

Carbohydrates are a source of energy for your body.

Fiber has many health benefits. It can keep your bowels regular, slow down the speed your body absorbs sugar and lower your cholesterol level.

If you have diabetes, eating foods high in sugar can make managing blood sugars difficult. High blood sugars can damage your kidneys.

Total carbohydrate is the total amount of starch, fiber and sugar in a food.

Total sugars include those that are naturally occurring and those that have been added to foods.

Added sugars tells you the amount of sugar that has been added during processing.

Look for foods **with less sugar and more fiber.**



Nutrition Facts	
about 9 servings per container	
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Amount per serving	% Daily Value*
Calories	120
Total Fat 3.5g	4%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	7%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 20g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Total Sugars 0g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 10mg	8%

NUTRITION CLAIMS

Some foods have special regulated claims about what nutrients or health benefits you might get from eating that food.

Even if a food has a claim, it is important to **look at the label and judge for yourself whether it is a good choice for you.**



Claims about sodium are especially important. When it says on the package “no salt added” check the list of ingredients to **make sure potassium chloride has not been added to replace sodium chloride.**

When a product has “reduced sodium” or is “lightly salted” you should still check the Nutrition Facts table to see how much sodium it contains per serving.

CONCLUSION

As part of a healthy diet with kidney disease, **cooking with unprocessed or minimally processed foods is usually the best option.**



If choosing packaged foods, **read the food label to make the best choices for you.**

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