

Background notes for course leader

Nutrition labels on foods can help you choose between products and brands to make healthier choices. These labels usually include information on energy (calories), protein, carbohydrate and fat. They may provide additional information on saturated fat, sugars, sodium, salt and fibre. All nutrition information is provided per 100 grams and sometimes per portion of the food. To compare the nutritional content of foods, it is easier to compare per 100g.

Most pre-packed food products also have a list of ingredients on the packaging or on an attached label. The ingredients list can also help you work out how healthy the product is.

Ingredients are listed in order of weight, so the main ingredients in the packaged food always come first. That means that if the first few ingredients are high-fat ingredients, such as cream, butter or oil, then the food in question is a high-fat food.

How to choose a healthier option:

Some foods will have front of pack labelling (or a traffic light system on the front).

- Red indicates the unhealthy choice.
- Amber means the food is OK.
- Green indicates a healthier choice.

Nutrient	High (per 100g)	Low (per 100g)
Fat	17.5g	Less than 3g
Saturated fat	More than 5g	Less than 1.5g
Sugar	More than 22.5g	Less than 5g
Salt	1.5g (or 0.6g sodium)	Less than 0.3g (or 0.1g sodium)

Food labelling

Look for the following information on food labels to make healthy choices:

Snacks:	Less than 3g fat per serving Less than 8g sugar per serving
Breakfast cereals:	Less than 5g fat per 100g Less than 10g sugar per 100g
Ready meals:	Less than 10g fat per portion Less than 350 calories (kcal) per portion
Pre-packed sandwiches:	Less than 6g fat per pack Less than 280 calories (kcal) per pack