Reading Food Nutrition Labels

Here are some tips for making the most of the information on the Nutrition Facts label:

Start here. Note the size of a single serving and how many servings are in the package.

Check total calories per serving. Look at the serving size - if you double the servings you eat, you double the calories and nutrients, including the Percent Daily Value (% DV).

Limit these nutrients. Limit your total fat to no more than 56–78 grams a day — including no more than 16 grams of saturated fat, less than two grams of trans fat, and less than 300 mg cholesterol (for a 2,000 calorie diet).

Get enough of these nutrients. Make sure you get 100 percent of the fiber, vitamins and nutrients.

Quick guide to % DV. The % DV section tells you the percent of each nutrient in a single serving, in terms of the daily recommended amount. Remember that the information shown in these panels is based on 2,000 calories a day. In general, as you think about the amount of calories in a food per serving, remember that for a 2,000-calorie diet:

- 40 calories per serving is considered low;
- 100 calories per serving is considered moderate; and
- 400 calories or more per serving is considered high.