



THE HEALTH FOOD COMPANY



KIDZ BODZ 10 WEEK HEALTHY EATING CHALLENGE

WEEK 6 - Trick the tricksters!

There are many "tricks" to watch out for on food packaging these days. It's certainly not as clear cut as you might think. The government has done a good job in introducing standards for packaging and labelling, but like most legislation it is open to interpretation and may not cover all instances or issues. This is a complex area however here at Kidz Bodz, we strive to provide the community with practical solutions to current issues. Here we have summarised a list of things to watch out for regarding food labelling and packaging.

- ✿ Nutrition panels: Most manufactured foods have a "Nutrition Information Panel" and an "Ingredients list" on the side panel. This is a legal requirement and these areas are where you should go to review the nutrition of the product that you are consuming.
- ✿ The "NIP" has three columns. The first will be a list of nutrition indicators- Energy, Protein, Fat, Sugar, Salt, etc. They are all important to nutrition, but the three that you definitely don't want to have too much of is Sugar, Fat, & Salt.
- ✿ The second column is the 'Per serve' column, whilst the third is likely to be the per 100g column.
- ✿ Some packages also include a 'total nutrition in the package', which makes it hard for you to calculate your actual nutrition intake.
- ✿ You will also find that the serving size will be noted, and the servings per can. It is possible to calculate the total nutrition of the package with this information. But be warned some manufacturers don't make it so easy!
- ✿ Take a close look at the servings per can/package. Sometimes in there lies another trick! A 200g tub of yoghurt - I would eat in one sitting - but many packages say 2 servings per tub. So unless you are sharing or only eating half the tub, then you will need to double all the nutrients on the list to find out exactly how much is in the whole tub.



**NATURALLY CREAMY YOGURT
LESS THAN 1% FAT
KEEP REFRIGERATED
STORE BELOW 4°C**

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION		
SERVING SIZE - 200g NUMBER OF SERVINGS - 5		
	PER SERVE	PER 100g
ENERGY	874 kJ 208 Cal	437 kJ 104 Cal
PROTEIN	10.6 g	5.3 g
FAT	1.9 g	0.95 g
CARBOHYDRATE		
- TOTAL	36.6 g	18.3 g
- SUGARS	36.2 g	18.1 g
SODIUM	140 mg	70 mg
POTASSIUM	432 mg	216 mg

**200g OF THIS PRODUCT CONTAINS
328mg OF CALCIUM WHICH IS
40% OF THE DAILY REQUIREMENT**

- ✳ Serving sizes: There is no such thing as a standard food size. Each food manufacturer is allowed to decide what they deem to be a 'standard'.
- ✳ Many food manufacturers make their decision on standard sizes on the 'perceived health', rather than the actual size.
- ✳ Go to your pantry and have a look. You are likely to see many instances of products where you or your family regularly eat more than the standard size. When a food manufacturer reduces the serving size of a product, they are able to reduce the amount of "baddies" like sugar, fat, salt, etc in the per serving column.

- ✳ Ingredients lists: These show all the individual items that go into manufacturing the product. A general guide is the longer the list, then the less healthy the product (due to the greater amount of artificial ingredients). And if there's some items you cannot read or pronounce like Acetaldehyde benzyl β-methoxyethyl acetal, then it probably isn't good for you!
- ✳ Food products are so variable and with each batch made the amount of nutrients and ingredients can change slightly. Some studies have also found that the nutrition panel is never 100% accurate. Therefore our food choices can be difficult. Always remember fresh is best. Anything in their natural packaging, such as fruits, vegetables, fish and lean meats, are always the best choice!
- ✳ Lite and Light - check the nutrition panel. This food might be light/lite in colour or weight not in energy, fat, sugar or salt!
- ✳ Fat-free - these foods must have less than 0.15% fat (less than 0.15g per 100g)
- ✳ Low-fat - these foods must have less 3% or less fat (less than 3g per 100g)
- ✳ With low-fat or fat-free products always check the total calories, sugar and salt content as these foods might have been boosted with a lot of sugar or salt to keep them tasty!
- ✳ No Added sugar - these foods may already be high in 'natural' sugars (eg fruit juices). They may also have a lot of artificial sweeteners, so check the ingredients. 'Sugary' words to look out for sucrose, fructose, glucose, aspartame and sucralose.
- ✳ No Added salt - again these foods may already be high in sodium, so check the nutrition panel for more information.
- ✳ Salt reduced - these food products have 25% less salt than a similar product. Lowering the salt in a product is always beneficial for health, but be careful and always check the nutrition label as these foods can still be high in salt.



- ☀ Low Sodium or Low Salt - These food products must have less than 120mg sodium per 100g. You should always try to select these products whenever possible!!
- ☀ Diet or Low Joule - foods are usually low in fat/sugar/total energy but are usually enhanced with artificial sweeteners. The jury is still out on artificial sweeteners so be aware!
- ☀ High Fibre - These products are definitely another good choice as they must contain more than 3g of fibre per 100g.
- ☀ Natural - there is no legislation governing words like 'natural', so anyone can put it on their product, no matter what's inside the product!
- ☀ Health claims - Food manufacturers are not allowed to make health claims on their food, i.e. linking a disease to a food. Examples could be: "Drink milk and you won't get osteoporosis." FSANZ are the legislative body on food labels for Australia and New Zealand. They are in the process of approving some health claims to be put on food labels or for advertising of foods. Keep a watchful eye out for these! Currently links between foods with folate and the prevention of neural tube defects are allowed. Visit www.foodstandards.gov.au/ for more information.

Class challenge:

Get every child to bring one product to school each, and check their packaging in the class room. Group the products into bad, good, great. Compare the manufacturers recommended standard serve vs. what is actually being eaten, contrast, compare and discuss.

- ☀ If a product claims to be 'low fat' then make sure that you also check the sugar level. As sugar essentially turns to fat/energy reserves if we don't 'burn it off', then excess sugar levels are often just as big an issues as fat intake.



- ☀ Meal components are different to a complete meal. You need to be mindful of the different components that you add together. You would need to add the nutrition of each component together to calculate the nutrition of the meal that you consume. For example, if you were making chicken stir fry, with ice cream for dessert- You need to add the nutrition of the chicken + jar of pre-prepared sauce + rice + vegetables + cooking oil use + ice cream

Class challenge:

Get every child to write down their favourite meal. As homework, they can go home and make a list of all of the products that their family places into that product, and if possible, the amount of each product. We can then do 'draft' in-take of sugar, fat, & salt

- ☀ Make sure that you pay more attention to the information on the nutrition panel than you do to the marketing claims elsewhere on the product. The information in the nutrition panel is governed by detailed legislation, whereby some marketing claims are not given the same amount of standardised scrutiny.

- ✿ Only 'food' requires nutrition information panels many snack foods, drinks, and treats still lack this information. As a general rule, if there isn't a nutrition information panel on a manufactured food, you can assume that it's NOT great for you!
- ✿ What do you do if you feel misled by a manufacturer? Many companies have toll free customer service numbers that you can call to make complaints. Many companies are now watching their complaints statistics much closer than before, so making contact may make the difference!
- ✿ The Australian and state governments have many websites where you can do further research on this topic, as do some of reputable food companies, such as Sanitarium Health Foods.
- ✿ Remember the best foods don't have any labels whatsoever, and come in their own natural packaging, just the way nature intended- Like fruit and vegetables.



For more information about labelling tricks or the fantastic Kidz Bodz program please call 1300 731 149 or visit www.kidzbodz.com.au