

# PALO PINTO GENERAL HOSPITAL

400 SW 25th Ave., Mineral Wells, TX 76067  
940-325-3102

## Health Promotion Series—Nutrition

Vol. 2

Yvonne Hampton, RD, LD

### Reading Labels

While we are encouraging a healthier diet by increasing the unprocessed or minimally processed foods such as fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, nuts, and seeds for example, there is still a place for processed foods in the healthy diet if chosen carefully.



Learning to read food labels can help. What you see on the front of the package is designed to make you want to buy the product. It may have words such as natural, organic, or low fat, but if you look at the ingredients or the food label panel you may be surprised. There may be hidden sugar, fat, trans-fat or hydrogenated fats you would want to avoid. “No fat” can describe foods loaded with sugar that are not healthy.

If you have never read food labels before, it may take some time to become a habit, but the effort will pay off towards long term health.

<http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/nutrition/nutrition-facts-and-food-labels/avoiding-processed-foods>

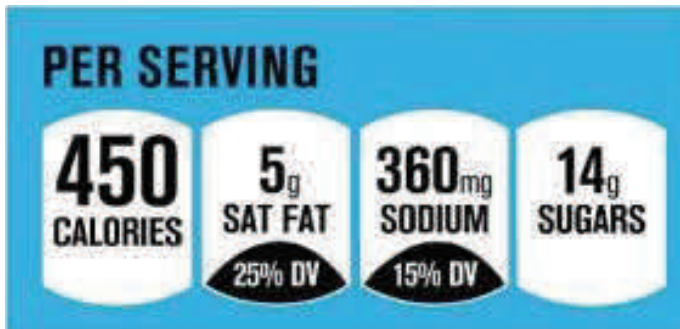
### **Read labels to identify nutrients, fats, and sodium**

While reading The Nutrition Facts panel, be sure to read how big the portion is and how many portions per container. Compare labels and look for the higher fiber, no trans fat, lower sugar, lower Na content.

<http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/nutrition/nutrition-facts-and-food-labels/the-basics-of-the-nutrition-facts-panel>

<http://www.diabetesforecast.org/videos/decoding-food-labels.html>

If you are on a low sodium diet for heart or blood pressure issues, try to limit sodium to less than 140 mg Na per serving, or 600 mg Na per meal.



## Limit use of sugars and foods containing sugar

With our increase in processed foods, our added sugar intake has risen to high levels that have corresponded to the rising obesity and Diabetes epidemic. Problems linked to high sugar intake have increased and now include high cholesterol, high triglycerides, fatty liver disease, gout, cardiac hypertrophy and A-fib, high blood pressure, insulin resistance, inflammation, and Alzheimer's disease.



As with all things, moderation is key, so how much is too much? On average, Americans consume 400 kcal from added sugars each day; the equivalent of 22 tsp. The American Heart Association recommends women should consume no more than 100 kcal (25 gram of sugar) and men no more than 150 kcal (37 gram of sugar) from added sugar daily. This could be increased somewhat with very active sports or high energy expenditure.

The natural sugar in fruit, dairy, and vegetables are considered part of a healthy diet and are not included in this total limit of added sugar, although concentrated fruit juice is used as an added sweetener in some foods.

### Sugar terms on labels:

Sugar	Dextrin
Sucrose	Anhydrous dextrose
White granulated sugar	Lactose
Raw sugar	Malt syrup
Brown sugar	Maltose
Confectioner's powdered sugar	Maple syrup
Invert sugar	Molasses
Honey	Nectars
High-fructose corn syrup	Pancake syrup
Fructose	Concentrated Fruit Juice
Corn syrup solids	Corn syrup

Please feel free to email me with any questions or if you would like additional information sent to you. My email address is [yhampton@ppgh.com](mailto:yhampton@ppgh.com).

