

# FRESH ATTITUDE

## on healthy living



## Nutrition Claims Explained

According to Health Canada a health claim is “any representation in labelling or advertising that states, suggests, or implies that a relationship exists between consumption of a food or an ingredient in the food and a person’s health.”

To help eliminate misleading claims, Health Canada regulates the standards of health claims used on food. While flashy claims may entice you to purchase a product, it’s always best to read the nutrition facts table and ingredient list to ensure it’s actually a healthy choice.

*Here are a few common misleading claims:*

- **Multigrain or made with whole grains** - always check the ingredient list to ensure that the first ingredient is in fact 100% whole grains and not a refined flour with just a

few whole grains in the mix.

- **No sugar added** - doesn’t mean the product won’t have naturally occurring sugar (fruit juices often have this claim). Even natural sugars will raise your blood sugar level so check the sugar content/serving size.
- **Sugar Free** - could mean it has artificial sweeteners that are usually chemically derived and sometimes worse than sugar itself to ingest. Check the ingredient list for aspartame, acesulfame, sucralose or sugar alcohols (like sorbitol) to name a few.
- **Fat Free** - similar to above, when you take a nutrient out it needs to be replaced somehow. In the case of fat free it usually means more sugar or artificial chemicals. Check the ingredient list for details!
- **Gluten Free** - doesn’t equal healthy! Check the nutrition facts and ingredients to ensure it isn’t high

## ASK EMILIE

**Q:** Hey Emilie! How do I know how many nutrients I need in a day?

**A:** That depends on a lot of factors, including your age, gender, activity level and overall health. The best way to find out what’s best for you is to talk to a Registered Dietitian. Until then, Health Canada puts out general guidelines that can help. First, use Nutrition Facts Tables and Ingredient lists to find out what’s in the food you are eating, then compare them to the guidelines for your age and gender. You’ll find helpful label reading tips on the next page!



Contact Emilie Williams, HBSc in Food and Nutrition at [emiliewilliams@browns.ca](mailto:emiliewilliams@browns.ca) to ask your question for the next edition of FA!

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### Take your health in your own hands!

Become a label reading expert!

A nutrition facts table can be found on almost all packaged food items. They help you compare products easily, learn about the nutritional value of a food and help you make better food choices! Here are some helpful tips when reading your next nutrition label:

- **Serving Size** - pay attention to this as it can be deceiving. One serving size doesn't always mean the whole item (for example an entire chocolate bar). Also be mindful of serving sizes when comparing two items.
- **% Daily Value** - gives you a quick overview of the nutrient profile of the food. As a rule for all nutrients, < 5% is a little and > 15% is a lot. Nutrients you want more of would be fibre and vitamins while nutrients you want less of are fats and sodium. % Daily Value is usually based on the Recommended Daily Intake of vitamins and minerals for healthy adults (see chart below).
- **Calories** - it's important to get to the bottom of the calorie make-up of food. Foods higher in calories don't necessarily mean they aren't healthy.
- **Fat** - not all fats are made equal! Unsaturated fats are ok in small quantities while you should limit your intake of saturated and trans fats.
- **Sodium** - choosing foods that are low in sodium will help you maintain a healthy blood pressure. Use the % Daily Value to help gauge the level of sodium in food.
- **Carbs** - look for foods high in fiber and low in added sugars.
- **Don't just stop at the label, the ingredient list** can also provide you with valuable nutrition information. Ingredients are listed by weight with the ingredient present in the largest amount at the beginning. A general rule- look for recognizable ingredients that you can pronounce!

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 1/2 cup (50 g) / pour 1/2 tasse (50 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Teneur	% valeur quotidienne
<b>Calories / Calories</b> 170	
<b>Fat / Lipides</b> 0.1 g	1 %
Saturated / saturés 0.1 g	1 %
+ Trans / trans 0 g	
<b>Cholesterol / Cholestérol</b> 0 mg	
<b>Sodium / Sodium</b> 5 mg	1 %
<b>Carbohydrate / Glucides</b> 41 g	14 %
Fibre / Fibres 1 g	4 %
Sugars / Sucres 33 g	
<b>Protein / Protéines</b> 2 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	10 %
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	0 %
Calcium / Calcium	2 %
Iron / Fer	10 %

#### Dietary Reference Intakes for Men Aged 19 - 50

Nutrient	Dietary Reference Intake
Energy*	3067 kcal/day <i>*subtract 10 kcal/day for each year over 19</i>
Carbs	130g/day
Total Fiber	38g/day
Fat	20-35% of daily calories
Protein	0.8g/kg body weight/day
Water	3.7L/day
Sodium*	1500mg/day <i>*recommended dietary allowance/upper limit</i>

#### Dietary Reference Intakes for Women Aged 19 - 50

Nutrient	Dietary Reference Intake
Energy*	2403 kcal/day <i>*subtract 7 kcal/day for each year over 19</i>
Carbs	130g/day
Total Fiber	25g/day (19-30); 21g/day (31-50)
Fat	20-35% of daily calories
Protein	0.8g/kg body weight/day
Water	2.7L/day
Sodium*	1500mg/day <i>*recommended dietary allowance/upper limit</i>