

Understanding the information on a food label is essential for making healthy food choices. This fact sheet provides information on what to look for when reading a food label. Reading food labels is important when comparing processed foods.

Use the [Smart Choices RED food and drink criteria tables](#) to compare a product's nutrition information with the Smart Choices criteria.

Nutrition Information		
Servings per package: 8		
Serving size: 60g		
	Per serve	Per 100g
Energy	647kJ	778kJ
Protein	2.6g	4.3g
Fat		
Total	0.3g	0.5g
Saturated	0.1g	0.2g
Carbohydrate		
Total	24.1g	40.2g
Sugar	4.1g	6.8g
Fibre	1.2g	2.1g
Sodium	2mg	3.3mg

QUANTITY PER SERVE

For Smart Choices, use this to column to compare snack foods. Remember to check that the serve size you provide is the same as what is suggested on the label.

SATURATED FAT

Saturated fat has been linked to high blood cholesterol.

SUGARS

Sugars are a form of carbohydrate. Sugars occur naturally in some foods, such as fruit and dairy products, and are also added to a wide variety of foods.

QUANTITY PER 100g

For Smart Choices, use this column to compare meals.

ENERGY

Too much energy from food can contribute to excess weight gain.

FIBRE

Fibre keeps the digestive system healthy.

SODIUM

Too much sodium has been linked to high blood pressure. Many people consume more than they need.

Tip: Check the serve size of the product. The serve quoted on some food and drink labels may not be the same as the serve size sold in the tuckshop.

The ingredients list

Ingredients are listed in order of quantity from the highest to the lowest. Look for fat, sugar and salt on the ingredients list. If these are listed towards the start of the ingredients list, it is highly likely that the product is not a healthy choice.

Ingredients that contain fat include:

- beef fat
- butter
- shortening
- coconut
- coconut oil
- copha
- cream
- dripping
- lard
- palm oil
- ghee
- mayonnaise
- sour cream
- vegetable oils and fats
- full cream milk powder
- mono, di or triglycerides
- oven fried, baked or toasted

Ingredients that contain salt include:

- baking powder
- celery salt
- garlic salt
- sodium
- meat or yeast extract
- onion salt
- monosodium glutamate (msg)
- rock salt
- sea salt
- sodium bicarbonate
- sodium nitrate
- stock cubes

Ingredients that contain sugar include:

- brown sugar
- corn syrup
- dextrose
- disaccharides
- fructose
- glucose
- golden syrup
- honey
- xylitol
- malt
- mannitol
- maple syrup
- monosaccharides
- raw sugar
- sorbitol
- sucrose

What is the Health Star Rating?

The Health Star Rating (HSR) system is a new initiative from the Commonwealth Government. It ranks food products on a scale from half to five stars on the front of food packs. The intent is similar to Smart Choices but the criteria is a little different.