

Food Labels

*I'm confused by all of the labels I see on foods,
like "fat free" and "low calorie."*

What do these terms mean?

Food labels can help you choose items that are lower in sodium, saturated, and total fat, trans fat, cholesterol, and calories. When you shop for groceries, look for these claims on cans, bottles, and other packaging:

CALORIE-FREE

fewer than 5 calories

LOW CALORIE

40 calories or fewer

REDUCED CALORIE

at least 25% fewer calories than the regular food items has

LIGHT OR LITE

50% less fat or 33% fewer calories than the regular food item has

FAT FREE

less than ½ gram of fat

LOW FAT

3 grams of fat or fewer

LOW SATURATED FAT

1 gram of less per serving and 15% less of calories from saturated fat

REDUCED FAT

at least 25% less fat than the regular food items has

LIGHT IN FAT

half the fat compared to the regular food item

CHOLESTEROL FREE

fewer than 2 milligrams cholesterol and no more than 2 grams of saturated fat

LOW CHOLESTEROL

20 milligrams or fewer cholesterol and 2 grams or less saturated fat

SODIUM FREE

fewer than 5 milligrams sodium

VERY LOW SODIUM

fewer than 35 milligrams sodium

LOW SODIUM

fewer than 140 milligrams sodium

LOW SODIUM MEAL

fewer than 140 milligrams sodium per 3½ Oz.

REDUCED OR LESS SODIUM

at least 25% less sodium than the regular food item

LIGHT IN SODIUM

at least 50% less sodium than the regular food item

UNSALTED OR NO SALT ADDED

No salt added to product during processing, but this is not a sodium-free food

HIGH FIBER

5 grams of more fiber

(Source: Adapted from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services — National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute)

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