

Session 6 – Food Labels and Processed Foods

How to read a food label

Understanding what is in packaged food is hard, as there is a lot of information listed. Use the traffic light system found on packaged foods and drinks, as it shows the nutritional information.

It will include the details of energy, fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt content.

1/4 pot contains

Energy 562kJ/ 135kcal	Fat 8.0g	Saturates 0.8g	Sugars <0.1g	Salt 0.33g
7%	11%	4%	<1%	6%

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 2249kJ/539kcal

Red means high. You should try to cut down, eat less often or eat smaller amounts.

Amber means medium. If a food contains mostly amber, you can eat it most of the time.

Green means low. The more green on a label, the healthier the food is.

Have more greens and ambers and less reds for a healthier balanced diet.

Food label decoder

All measures as 100g/ml

	FAT	SATURATES	(TOTAL) SUGARS	SALT
LOW HEALTHIER CHOICE	3g or less	1.5g or less	5g or less	0.3g or less
MEDIUM OK MOST OF THE TIME	3.1g to 17.5g	1.6g to 5g	5.1g to 22.5g	0.31g to 1.5g
HIGH JUST OCCASIONALLY	More than 17.5g	More than 5g	More than 22.5g	More than 1.5g



Download the free NHS Food Scanner app



Session 6 – Food Labels and Processed Foods

Marketing and Packaging claims

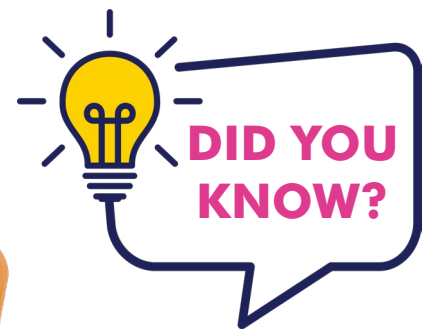
Nutrition claims on packaging are regulated by law. Examples below:

- 'Sugar free' (must contain less than 0.5g sugars per 100g)
- 'Low fat' (must contain less than 3g fat per 100g)
- 'High in fibre' (must contain at least 6g fibre per 100g)

Processed Foods

Processed foods often have more energy and are higher in fat, salt and sugar.

They often lose fibre during processing.



Best before means the quality of the food will be best before this date

Use by dates are for food safety - eat by this date

Session 6 – Food Labels and Processed Foods

Behaviour change diary

	Nutrition goal	Physical activity goal	Did you do it? ✓ Yes ✗ No P = Partly	Comments What made it easy? What made it hard?
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				