

Mastering the label lingo

Protein



Now it's time to learn about one more section of the Nutrition Facts label: protein. Most of us get plenty of protein, but not always from the healthiest sources. When selecting a food for its protein content, such as meat, poultry, dry beans, milk and milk products, make choices that are lean, low-fat or fat free. Some healthier protein choices include:

- Fish – mackerel, herring, albacore tuna, sardines and salmon are all excellent choices
- Chicken prepared with the skin removed
- Eggs and egg substitute
- Beans and legumes, such as pinto beans, black beans, kidney beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), lentils and black-eyed peas
- Low-fat dairy products – yogurt, low-fat (1 percent) or fat-free (skim) milk and cottage cheese
- Tofu and soy products
- Nuts and seeds

A Percent Daily Value (PDV) is required to be listed if a claim is made for protein, such as “high in protein.” None is needed, unless the food is meant for use by infants and children under four years old. Current research shows that adequate protein intake is not a public health concern for adults and children more than four years of age. Your protein needs vary depending on your weight and activity level.

Now that you've mastered the label lingo, you have the tools and know-how for a lifetime of healthier eating.



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