SCAFFSTRONG

NOURISH WITH EASE

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO FUELING YOUR BODY FOR OPTIMAL HEALTH

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Introduction

Welcome to my simple guide to nutrition - the only guide you'll ever need to help you navigate all things food.

I've written this ebook to provide you with the tools, knowledge and resources required in order to plan and maintain a healthy nutritional approach. I'll be coming at this from the angle of the food and drink you consume for optimal health and wellness, and in particular, dieting and weight loss.

I'll be covering everything from calories, macronutrients to micronutrients to building healthier habits around food.

These principles will allow you to reach your goals, such as weight loss or maintenance, regardless of what kind of nutritional approach may work best for you.

Your aim throughout is to adopt new dietary habits that will make it easier for you to stick with your goals regardless of what life throws at you!
The amount you know about how the body works can directly help determine whether or not you are successful in improving your health.

I understand that there are many conflicting pieces of nutrition information online, which is why I have put together this free eBook!

This will give you enough background information on nutrition to improve your understanding on how it all works and how we can optimise your health. I really hope you find this guide useful.

Please promise me that once you finish reading, you won't simply forget everything but put your newly gained knowledge to use, even if it's just a fraction of what you have learned.

Calories Are king!

When it comes to nutrition.

The calories you consume will ultimately determine whether or not your goal of losing fat will be successful. If you wish to lose weight then you have to burn more calories than you've taken in. This is the basic principle behind losing fat.

Calories are also the determining factor as to why slow and steady wins the race. Those who manage their calories carefully and consistently over a span of time, will come out ahead those who do not!

Calories are the basic aspect of maintaining your health, especially when it comes to your diet. Many people see fat loss as an easy or simple task, but in reality it's not. At the end of the day, you have to burn more calories than you consume. It's how you accomplish this feat that makes this process difficult (and sometimes complex). However, there are a few things you will need to know and understand.

CALORIES IN VS CALORIES OUT

CALORIE DEFICIT

To put it simply, this is where you consume **less** calories than you burn day-to-day life. If you want to lose fat, you'll need to be in a **calorie deficit,** this can either be done via eating less, moving more or a combination of both.

MAINTENANCE CALORIES

This is where we base your calories so that you can consume enough energy to maintain your weight and also sustain adequate nutrition. It's important to understand that the amount of energy we require on a daily basis can change pretty drastically from person to person.. **It occurs when you burn the same amount of calories as you consume.**

CALORIE SURPLUS

A **calorie surplus** is required during a gaining phase. This requires you to consume **more** calories than you expend each day.

Managing All Things Nutrition

Nutrition is obviously the foundation of any successful regime - whether that's performance-based, aesthetic goals, or health reasons or a combination of the three. It would be naive to assume that there won't be some nutritional sacrifice when it comes to achieving your goal, but that being said, finding a balance between harnessing progress and still enjoying your food and drink is key.

Your ability to be able to manage those two variables will be crucial towards short and long-term progress;

As with any nutritional approach, it all comes down to feasibility and your ability to stay consistent in your daily routine. If you follow a consistently structured diet each week, and if with it you're still getting all the nutrients you need and you're managing to do it without having to drastically cut down on your food intake; this is a good indication that your dieting efforts are paying off, more so if no drastic changes have been made lately.

In my experience, fat loss plateauing or weight gain is often more of a result of eating too few calories rather than eating an over-abundance of them - so unless you notice yourself putting on a lot of unhealthy weight overnight, it might be a good idea not to add an extra 200 calories per day just for the sake of doing so. If you are trying to lose weight, you want to make sure you are consuming enough calories.

For these reasons, your nutritional adjustments should generally be limited to 100-200cals per increase or decrease. These would generally be in the form of increased/decreased carbohydrates (25-50g). Protein and fats will generally remain fairly consistent, although you may eventually increase protein intake to either increase satiety (fullness) during a fat-loss phase, or to accommodate for trace protein for carbohydrates when these are increased during a gaining phase.

So What Are Calories?

Calories are the measurement for the amount of energy in an item of food or drink.

This is the amount of energy, that once the food has been consumed and digested, will be available to provide us with fuel to maintain normal day to day functions. Fuelling the body correctly will enable us to exercise at optimal levels. Depending on where the source of the calories come from depends on the structure of nutrients: fibre, amino acids, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

The 3 main sources we get calories from are Proteins, Fats and Carbohydrates.

Protein contains 4 kcals per gram
Fats contain 9 kcals per gram
Carbohydrates contain 4 kcals per gram
Alcohol contains 7 kcals per gram

A calorie is a unit of energy. So when we look at an individuals calorie intake, it really is a numbers game. This is where we can talk about calories in (what we consume) vs calories out (what we use) being the determining factor in how we can help to change your body.

Later in this guide I will help you get a better understanding of the thermic effect of food (TEF), digestion, absorption, and disposal of nutrients.

What Are Macronutrients?

Nutrients can be divided into 2 categories: **macronutrients** and **micronutrients**.

Macronutrients are those nutrients that the body needs in larger amounts. These provide the body with energy (calories).

Most have heard the term “macro” at some point or another. It is brought up a lot- especially when the topic is based around eating healthy or losing weight. You may have heard this mentioned in terms of calculating or tracking macros.

But what are macros?

Macros are macronutrients. Your body needs these nutrients in larger amounts in order to function properly. In addition, all of these nutrients provide your body with energy measured in the form of calories or kcals. There are four types of macronutrients: carbohydrates, proteins, fats and fibre. Each macronutrient has a vital role to play within the body.

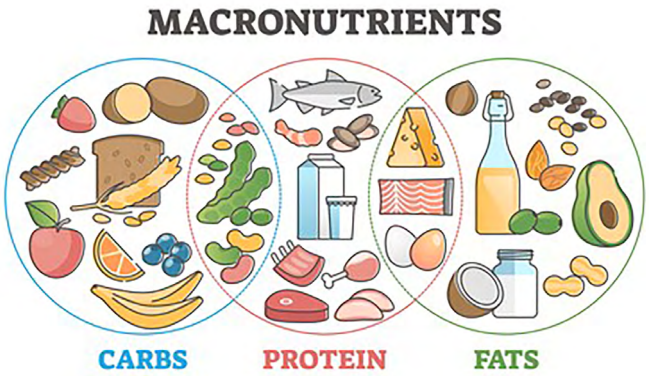
Micronutrients are the nutrients that the body needs in smaller amounts. These Include:

WATER SOLUBLE VITAMINS
Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, Vitamin B6, Vitamin B12, Vitamin C, Folic Acid

FAT SOLUBLE VITAMINS
Vitamin A, Vitamin D, Vitamin E, Vitamin K

MINERALS
Calcium, Potassium, Sodium, Iron, Zinc

All of these macro and micronutrients have specific roles in your body that allows you to function properly.



Is a Calorie Really Just a Calorie?

Foods that are highly processed are typically less filling than whole, unprocessed foods. Although they might taste better for a moment or two, they fail to contain most of the nutrient dense vitamins and minerals that our body needs. Many processed foods also add more empty calories like solid fats and sugars to make them taste better.

When most people are asked about the foods they typically over-consume on, the answer is almost always foods that contain high amounts of solid fats or added sugar. This is why fats and sugars are often wrongly blamed for an increase in weight, when really it's just that the person is in a calorie surplus.

When hunger strikes, we tend to seek out foods that are unfortunately higher in energy density (more calories) but lower in nutrient density (fewer nutrients) as they will temporarily fix the immediate problem of hunger.

It's also very easy to over-consume them because they often taste a lot nicer than nutrient dense fruit and vegetables.

A 1500-2000cal intake, using whole and unprocessed foods is much easier to maintain than one using processed junk food. This is partly due to the critical nutrients that will give your body more energy and help your willingness and desire to exercise and physically move around more.

Calorie Dense

Energy-dense foods tend to have a much higher number of calories per serving. These types of food will usually contain a high sugar or fat content, often they will have both.

An example of a food with high energy density, is milk or white chocolate. Chocolate (unless it's a very high % of dark) has lots of calories from the sugar and fat that fit into a small serving size but also bundles of taste. Green vegetables in comparison have a low energy density because there are only a few calories in a whole plateful yet do not do a great deal to satisfy the taste buds.

You should ideally try to limit the amount of calorie dense foods in your diet for optimal hunger satisfaction- especially when dieting.

Nutrient Dense

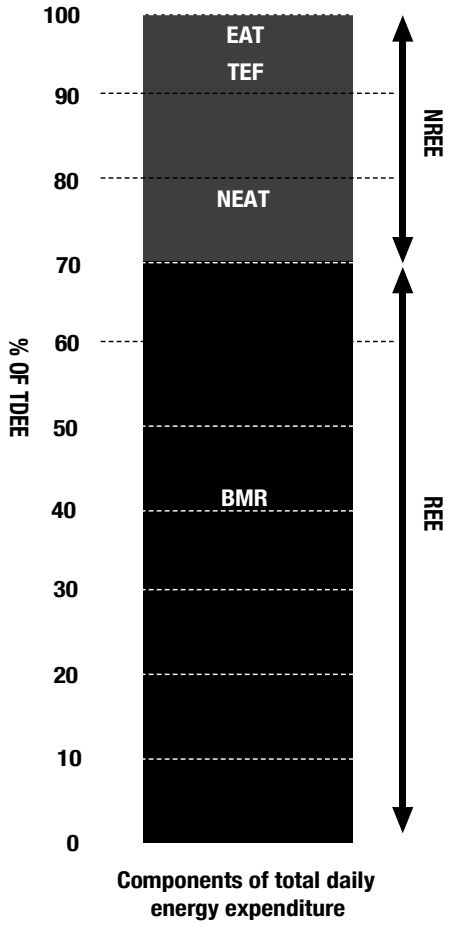
This is determined by the amount of nutrients in the food source.

The main categories the nutrients fall under are: dietary fibre, complex carbohydrates, amino acids, antioxidants and dietary vitamins and minerals.

To use the same example; spinach is packed full of nutrients yet the milk chocolate has very little.

Filling your diet with a higher proportion of nutrient dense food with a lower ratio of energy ultimately gives you a diet that can satisfy both hunger and taste whilst sustaining an intake of calories relative to your goals.

T.D.E.E Total Daily Energy Expenditure



If we want to either lose fat or build muscle it all comes down to calories in vs calories out at its most basic level. To help explain this a little better I'm going to break down in this graph to show you what contributes to your daily calorie expenditure.

T.D.E.E TOTAL DAILY ENERGY EXPENDITURE

Your daily expenditure can be broken down into two types. BMR or Non resting energy expenditure.

BMR

Basal Metabolic Rate is the number of calories required to keep your body functioning at rest. BMR is also known as your body's metabolism; therefore, any increase to your metabolic weight, such as exercise, will increase your BMR. This accounts for up to 70% of your total energy expenditure. This is because even when we rest, our body is still utilizing energy to perform even the most basic functions such as breathing, blood circulation and the processing of nutrients have consumed when eating.

NON-RESTING ENERGY EXPENDITURE.

This is made up of three main components and is given a metabolic value that corresponds to the energy cost of physical activity, which represents approximately 30% of the total energy expenditure.

NON-EXERCISE ACTIVITY THERMOGENESIS. (N.E.A.T)

Is the energy expended for everything we do that is not sleeping, eating or sports-like exercise. It ranges from the energy expended walking around at work, typing, performing household work, gardening and even things like fidgeting and reaching for the TV remote! Changing daily habits and the amount of activity and general movement can massively improve the amount of energy we burn, as NEAT accounts for much more energy expenditure than EAT does.

EAT OR EXERCISE ACTIVITY THERMOGENESIS

This is where our planned and structured, physical activity and exercise comes into play. IF you are going to the gym or playing a regular sport, it will fall under this category. Although this only makes up around 5% of the actual calories we burn as most people only do active exercise for 30-90mins a day.

T.E.F (THERMIC EFFECT OF FOOD)

The thermic effect of food (T.E.F) also known as diet-induced thermogenesis or postprandial thermogenesis, is a reference to the increase in metabolic rate (I.e. the rate at which your body burns calories) that occurs after ingestion of food. Our body, more specifically our digestive system uses energy/calories to digest, absorb and store nutrients from food.

Protein

OK, lets start from the top with protein.

Most of us are aware of protein and its importance in the diet. Proteins are made up of amino acids, which are the building blocks of all tissues in your body- including muscles, nails, hair and more! Without adequate amounts, your tissues will not grow correctly and this can cause health complications.

The main benefit of protein is the impact it has on your body's growth and maintenance. For example, if you're actively trying to build muscle, protein is essential, as it will help maintain your muscle mass, while also helping to repair muscle.

Aside from growth and maintenance, there are countless other benefits of protein, including transporting and storing nutrients around the body, keeping you feeling fuller for longer and also boosting the immune system.

Food Swaps - 20 Grams Of Protein

Lean/White Meat Protein	Fatty/Red Meat Protein
Chicken Breast 80g	Chicken Thigh 80g
Whey Protein Powder 25	Roast Pork 90g
Turkey Breast 80g	Lamb Chop 90g
Skyr Yogurt 180g	Salmon 90g
Egg Whites 200ml Liquid or 6 Medium Egg Whites	5% Beef Mince 100g
Turkey Bacon 3 Rashers	Eggs Whole 3
White Fish 100g	Sirloin Steak 80g

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are not the enemy!

Glucose is your body's number one energy source and, you guessed it, carbs contain glucose, so filling up on whole carbs such as veggies, whole grains and nuts is a great way to boost your energy and fuel your day.

Carbohydrates benefit your heart in other ways too! Research suggests that wholegrain carbs, such as breads, pastas, and grains such as quinoa, help reduce your chance of heart disease, while also lowering your cholesterol.

Any exercise between 30 seconds and a few hours will use carbohydrates as its main fuel source.

Carbohydrates are an absolute must post-workout, as they directly replenish your glycogen stores, so the energy you've expended during exercise is replenished. After a workout, your body's ability to soak up glycogen is heightened so it's essential that you make the most of this and get some carbs in your system soon after a heavy gym session.

So, what happens if you don't consume carbs after a workout? Well, you're likely to feel tired and it can also lead to prolonged muscle soreness.

Food Swaps - 20 Grams Of Carbohydrates

Quick Release	Slow Release
White Potato 100g	Sweet Potato 100g
White Rice (Cooked) 70g	Unprocessed Rolled Oats 30g
Snack A Jacks 2 (Carbs 26g)	Quinoa 30g
Jam 30g	Brown Rice 90g
White Bread 2 Slices (Carbs 26g)	Brown Bread 1 Slices (Carbs 24g)
Raisins 25g	Cooked Lentils 100g
Instant Oats 1 Sachet (Carbs 24g)	Raspberries 170g
½ A Bagel (Carbs 27g)	Strawberries 260g

Fat

Next, we're moving onto fat. Since the 60's, people have blamed fats found in food for the fat around the middle, causing a mass shift in food labels, culture and diets. In excess, too much fat will of course make you put on weight, however fat is essential in the diet and shouldn't be feared.

Fat can help improve blood cholesterol levels, reduce inflammation and is vital in the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E & K). You may wonder "isn't fat bad for you?" but your body needs fat from food. It's a major source of energy. It helps you absorb some vitamins and minerals. Fat is needed to build cell membranes, the vital exterior of each cell, and the sheaths surrounding nerves. It is essential for blood clotting, muscle movement, and inflammation.

People who decide to purposefully increase their dietary fat will also be likely find their hunger levels are reduced, consequently stopping unnecessary snacking.

For long-term health, some fats are better than others. Good fats include mono unsaturated and polyunsaturated fats.

Bad ones include industrial-made trans fats. Saturated fats fall somewhere in the middle.

Food Swaps - 10 Grams Of Fats

Peanut Butter 15g (8g fat)	Mixed Nuts 20g 11g fat
Almonds 20g 10g fat	Avocado 80g 12g fat
Olive Oil 10 grams	Whole Eggs 2 whole (12g fat)

Alcohol

Alcohol is technically a macronutrient, but unlike others on the list, it won't do anything for you nutritionally speaking. Alcohol contains plenty of calories that can easily sabotage your diet without careful planning.

That's why it's important to keep tabs on how much you're consuming as you try to drop those pounds. Tools like the tools I mentioned earlier in this guide will drastically aid you as you go through the process of losing weight and shedding body fat.

Hydration

Water really is one of the most important nutritional aspects and should not be neglected. Try to drink a minimum of two litres per day to ensure you are hydrated in order to achieve optimal training and recovery.

As an essential nutrient, water plays a key role in the human body. We can survive up to several weeks without food, but only a few days without water.

Every system in the body, from cells and tissues to vital organs require water to function.

Depending on your training and goals, you may need to increase water intake further, but a general recommendation is 2 litres per day.

Nutritional Labels

Reading nutritional labels and analyzing the makeup of the food you eat will ensure that your body is receiving the nutrients that it needs.

The most commonly seen nutritional label in today's world consists of a set of different colored blocks arranged along a per serving basis. Typically, this kind of label is found on everything from frozen pizzas to cereal boxes, helping to give us insight into how many calories are per serving size, when the product reached its "best buy" date, sodium content in milligram form, etc.

The common colors associated with these blocks are red (high), amber (medium) and green (low) for sodium per 100g. But what about other types of nutrients? Nutritional labeling may also include information regarding cholesterol or sugars per 100g.

For those who don't rely on packaged food or meals, tracking your diet can be tricky and preparing and calculating how many calories you should eat each day can become a difficult task to stay on top of. If you go by the nutrition facts provided by your favorite smartphone app like MyFitnessPal or nutracheck, make sure to double-check that it reflects what's written on the packaging before entering an amount into either of these apps. This also applies if you are not relying solely on packaged food or meals - try to use apps which involve light preparation so as to avoid any disparity between uncooked weight and nutritional values.

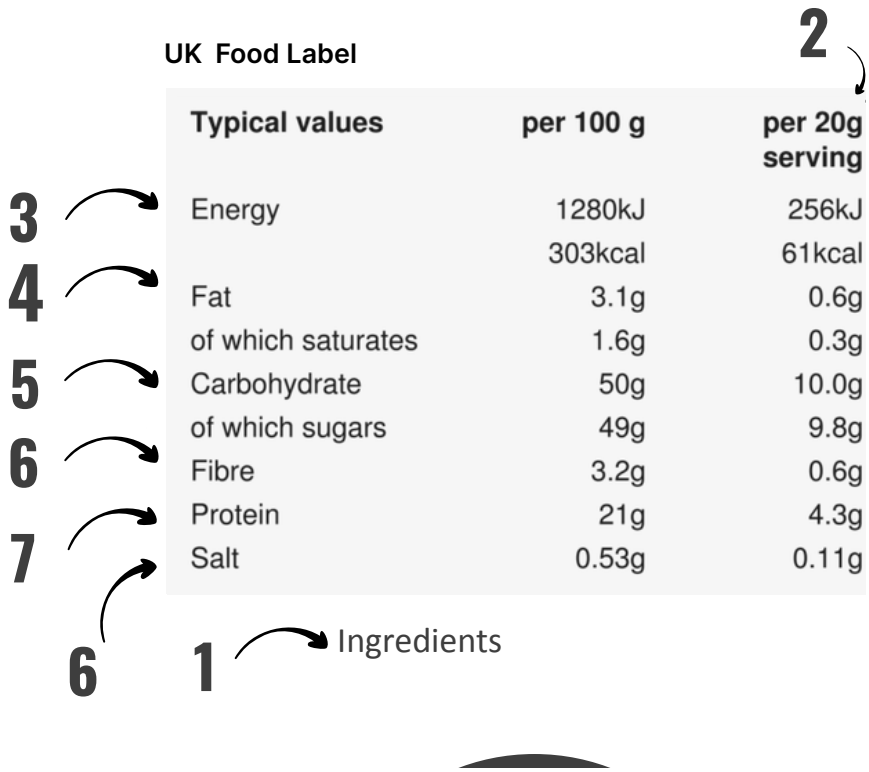
Understanding Food Labels!

Nutrition labels are constantly evolving in countries across the world. The changes reflect, not only new discoveries in the link between nutrition and health, but also public health efforts to help people make healthier and more informed decisions.

There's SO MUCH information on our food labels these days.

It's almost like the label has its own language! It can be a real challenge to understand everything you're looking at. What does that info really mean to you, your diet, and your health?

In this section I've created a quick label strategy to make it easy for you to see what is in the product. This will help you see the calories, Ingredients and macros.



1. Ingredients
2. Serving Size
3. Calories
4. Fats
5. Carbohydrates
6. Nutrients
7. Protein

Portion Size!

Why Its Important?

It's very helpful to look at the number of servings in the package.

The suggested serving size is the amount of food represented in the nutritional breakdown.

This is important because we often eat more than the suggested serving size without ever realizing it – especially when it comes to ultra processed foods. As a result, you could be unknowingly taking in a LOT more calories than you anticipated.

Calorie Control!

How Many Calories In A Single Serving **VS** **The Amount Your Planning On Eating**

While calories aren't "bad" or "good," it's a good idea to know how many are in each serving of food. That way, you'll have an idea what proportion of your overall daily fuel intake the food represents, especially when it's a processed food (which often contain more calories and fewer healthy micro nutrients).

Note the proportion of fats/carbs/protein you're taking in, so that you are eating in alignment with your goals.

Food Labels

All nutrition information on food labels should be provided per 100 grams of the product. It will often also be shown per portion or serving size as well. I recommend basing any calculation you might make off the 100gram information as the serving sizes can often be random numbers and also many not be a true indication of what you're actually having.

Food labels will also have a list of ingredients found in the product. Ingredients are listed from greatest to smallest by weight, so the main ingredients in the packaged food will always be listed first. Using the first three ingredients gives us a good idea of the constituents of a product but in many cases you will need to understand some of the names better:

ENERGY
This is described as the amount of energy in a set food or drink, its measured in calories. On food labels, the calorie content is given in kcal and kJ, which are short for kilo calories and kilojoules. Kilojoules are the metric measurement of calories.

PROTEIN
This is shown as the total amount of protein in the food or drink.

CARBOHYDRATES
These can be broken down into 3 main groups; Sugar, fibre and starch. This is then broken into 2 groups, complex and simple.

Complex carbs are Fibre and starch based. While simple carbs are sugar based. Depending on the values of each of these in the food or drink helps determine its nutrient quality and density. Ideally you want to be looking for foods higher in complex carbs. Simple carb based foods do have their place in nutrition plans like pre or post workout.

FIBRE
Fibre is made up of the indigestible parts or compounds of plants, which pass relatively unchanged through our stomach and intestines. Fibre is mainly a carbohydrate. The main role of fibre is to keep the digestive system healthy. Your daily target is 30g of fibre per day.

STARCH
Starchy foods are a good source of energy and the main source of a range of nutrients in our diet. As well as starch, they contain fibre, calcium, iron and B vitamins. Wholegrain varieties of starchy foods and potatoes (particularly when eaten with their skins on) are good sources of fibre.

SUGAR
This shows how much of the carbohydrate content of the food or drink comes from sugars.

SALT
This is the amount of salt that is in the product. While most sodium comes from salt, some can be naturally occurring in food.

SATURATED FATS
These are easy to distinguish as they're solid at room temperature, these are mostly found in red meat and coconut or palm oil.

UNSATURATED FATS
These are liquid at room temperature – consisting of oils mostly from plants, for example corn/peanut oil. There are also mono-unsaturated and polyunsaturated fats which are considered the healthy fats, these are found in avocados, nuts and sunflower oil.

TRANS-FATS
Most commonly known as man-made fats, produced by a chemical process known as hydrogenation; where hydrogen is added to liquid oil, often to harden the structure.

POLYOLS
These can also be called sugar alcohols, are used as food ingredients to replace sugar in many sugar-free and reduced-calorie foods and beverages. In some people,excessive consumption of polyols may cause gastrointestinal distress.

VITAMINS OR MINERALS
If the food has what would be deemed as a significant contribution of vitamins or minerals it can be listed and if the food is fortified (extra nutrients added) these also need to be listed.

These are other names you may find for added fats and sugars:
Animal fat/oil, beef fat, butter, chocolate, milk solids, coconut oil/milk/cream, copha, cream, ghee, dripping, lard, suet, palm oil, sour cream, vegetable shortening. Dextrose, fructose, glucose, golden syrup, honey, maple syrup, sucrose, malt, maltose, lactose, brown sugar, caster.

The Traffic Light System

The traffic light labelling system will tell you whether a food has high, medium or low amounts of fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt. It will also tell you the number of calories and kilojoules in that particular product. These helps the us see very quickly if the nutritional values of the product are good or bad for our daily allowance.

When looking for healthy options we should be aiming to select food with mostly green or amber on the label. This should mean they are nutrient dense. Pay close attention to the serving size, although most will be written in 100gms or 100ml some can be very misleading and be measured in different serving sizes if it helps the product fall into the green or amber coding.

FAT
High in fat is more than 17.5grams per 100grams.

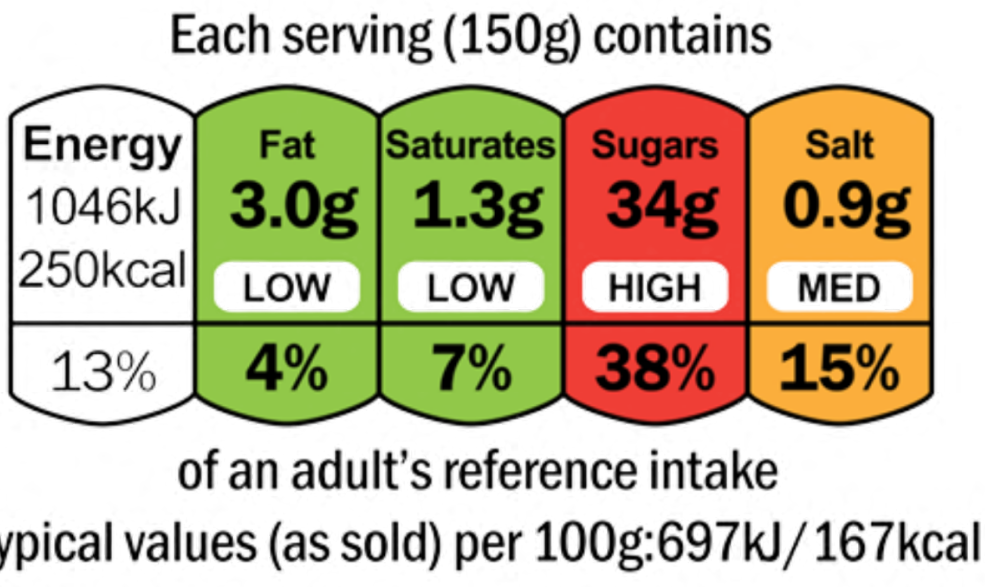
Low in fat is 3grams or less per 100grams.

SATURATED FAT
High in saturated fat is more than 5grams per 100grams.

Low in saturated fat is 1.5grams or less per 100grams.

SALT
High in salt is more than 1.5grams per 100grams.

SUGAR
High in sugar is more than 22.5grams per 100grams.
Low in sugar is 5grams or less per 100grams.



What Does It All Mean?

Did you know the labels on your foods have specific criteria and definitions?

HOW FOODS EARN THE ORGANIC LABEL PRODUCE:
Crops must be grown on soil that had no prohibited substances (i.e. synthetic fertilizers and pesticides) applied for the past 3 years.

MEAT & DAIRY:
The animals must be raised according to their natural living conditions – like being "free range" and able to graze. They must not be given hormones or antibiotics, and they must be fed organic feed and forage.

PACKAGED & PROCESSED FOODS:
Items must not contain artificial colours, flavours or preservatives. Ingredients must be organic, although approved non organic items may be added, such as enzymes in yogurt or baking soda in baked goods.

CAGE-FREE EGGS:
This simply means the chickens were raised without cages. However, they could still be living indoors in overcrowded space.

PASTURE RAISED:
The animals spent some time outdoors, feeding on grass or forage.

GRASS FED:
The animal's main source of food came from grass or forage and not grains. This does not tell you if antibiotics or hormones were used on the animal or what conditions it lived in.

NO ANTIBIOTICS:
This is basically just as it says: the animal was never fed antibiotics over the course of its life. It makes no claims over living conditions, etc.

Things You Should Know!

CALORIE FREE
Less than 5 calories per serving.

EXCELLENT SOURCE OF
Provides at least 20% of the daily value of a particular vitamin or nutrient per serving.

FAT-FREE/SUGAR-FREE
Less than 0 gram of fat or sugar per serving.

GOOD SOURCE OF
Provides at least 10% to 19% of the Daily Value of a particular vitamin or nutrient per serving.

HIGH IN
Provides 20% or more of the Daily Value of a specified nutrient per serving.

LOW CALORIE
40 calories or less per serving.

LOW CHOLESTEROL
20 milligrams or less and 2 grams or less of saturated fat per serving.

LOW SODIUM
140 milligrams or less of sodium per serving.

REDUCED
Product contains 25% less in the specified nutrient than the amount in the “regular” version of the product.

Summary

Here are 10 small ways you can improve your nutrition.

1. Keep your daily calorie intake to a reasonable amount. Find out how many calories you need for your age, gender, activity level and your personal weight goals (i.e., do you want to lose, gain or maintain your weight?). To help determine your calorie and nutrient needs,

2. Enjoy your food but eat less. Take time to fully enjoy what you are eating. This is called mindful eating. Eating quickly or not paying attention to what you eat, known as mindless eating, can lead to eating too many calories.

3. Keep portion sizes of food to a reasonable and recommended amount. Learn more about how much food to eat daily for your calorie needs, in the fruits, vegetables, protein and grains food categories.

4. Try to eat more of these foods: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins, and some low-fat dairy products. Try to make these the basis for your meals and snacks rather than r high-fat and non-nutritive foods.

5. Dedicate half your plate at meals to fruits and vegetables. Fruits, vegetables (and grains) offer important vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals. Most have little fat and no cholesterol. They also contain fibre to help with digestion and prevent constipation. Research shows that eating a diet high in fruits and vegetables may help lower cholesterol and blood sugar and prevent heart disease.

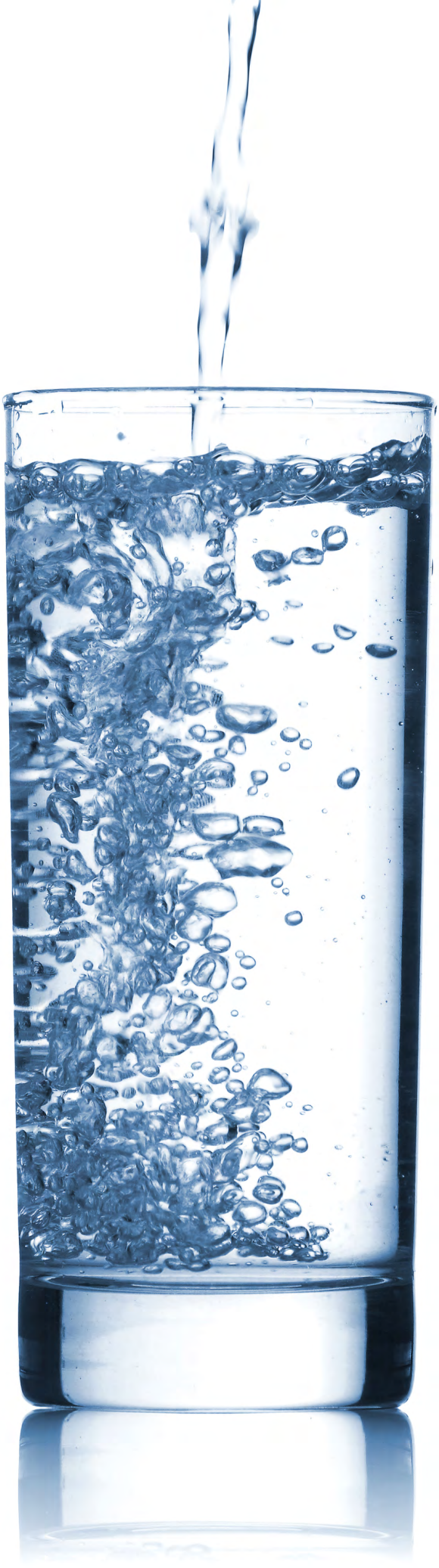
6. Try to make at least half (or preferably all) your daily grains whole grains. Foods made from whole grains are a major source of energy and fibre. Learn to read food labels so you can identify which grains are truly whole grains.

7. Select leaner sources of protein and try to use more plant-based proteins in your meals and recipes. Protein foods include animal sources (meat, poultry, seafood, eggs and dairy products) and plant sources (beans, peas, soy products, nuts, seeds).

8. Cut back on less healthy foods. These are foods high in saturated and solid (trans) fats and added sugars and salt, such as cookies, ice cream, candy, sweetened drinks, and fatty meats like bacon and hot dogs. These foods generally provide a lot of calories and minimal, if any, nutritional benefit. Have these as occasional treats but not every day.

9. Reduce your sodium (salt intake). Cut down on using canned, packaged and frozen processed foods. If you are buying these items, use the Nutrition Facts label to choose lower sodium versions of foods. High-sodium restaurant meals are also another significant source of added salt to one's diet.

10. Rethink your drink. Drink more water and other unsweetened beverages, instead of sugary and other high-calorie drinks. Soda, sweetened juice, energy and sports drinks are a major source of added sugar and calories in many peoples diets.



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