

HEALTH & WELLNESS LEARNING THE LABEL

September 2010

NUTRITION NEWS

Health & Wellness
Series

Understanding Nutrition Labels Part III

References:

Center for Science in the
Public Interest

<http://www.cspinet.org/new/sugar.html>

The American Journal for
clinical Nutrition

<http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/content/abstract/86/4/899>

The American Heart
Association

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4471>

United States Department of
Agriculture

www.usda.gov

Now that we have discussed the main players in a Nutrition Label, part III will address a few nutrients that often go overlooked.

SUGAR

Sugars and starches provide glucose to the body. Glucose is the main energy source for the brain, central nervous system, and red blood cells. Sounds like a good reason to eat sugar, right? Sugar in our diets originate two basic ways- from natural sources such as fruits, vegetables and milk products or from the food preparation and refining processes-known as added sugars. While a limited amount of sugar is necessary to our bodies for optimal function, an excess of sugar in our diets can be detrimental to our health. If we consume a well balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, our bodies' need for sugar will automatically be met...with no real need for "added sugars".

According to USDA research, U.S. consumers eat about 74 pounds of added sugars per year. That's about *23 teaspoons of added sugars every day--or 460 calories that supply no additional nutrients.*

The biggest contributor of added sugar in our diet is soft drinks. *One 16 ounce regular Sundrop contains over 66 grams (13 teaspoons) of added sugar!!* Other major sources of added sugar include ready to eat cereals, candy, cookies, ice cream, pre-packaged meals, and fruit juices.

Consuming too much sugar is directly related to an increased risk of obesity, which contributes to certain cancers and heart disease.

To some degree, we all have a sweet tooth. So, how much added sugar is okay to include in your daily diet? The American Heart Association recommends around **6 teaspoons** (30 grams) per day for women and **9 teaspoons** (45 grams) per day for men. *Stay tuned for subsequent Quick Drill segments relating to Sugar.*

PROTEIN

Protein is essential to the growth and maintenance of every cell in our body.

The USDA recommends anywhere from 40-70 grams of protein intake per day, depending on your age, gender and activity level. Individuals that engage in regular exercise- especially strength training, can benefit from higher intakes of protein. You should consult a physician or dietician to determine the appropriate amount for you.

Sources of high quality protein include: fish, white-meat poultry, skim milk, low fat dairy products, eggs, beans, pork tenderloin and lean cuts of beef.

*Note- High protein, low carb diets have increased in popularity over the past decade. While effective in short term weight reduction, these diets can pose more harm to your health than benefit. Please review the following link concerning high protein diets:

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=11234>

Breyer's Light Vanilla Ice Cream

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1/2 cup (68g)

Amount Per Serving

Calories	110	Calories from Fat	28
		% Daily Value*	
Total Fat	3.12 g		5%
Saturated Fat	1.95 g		10%
Trans Fat			
Cholesterol	10.2 mg		3%
Sodium	48.28 mg		2%
Potassium			
Total Carbohydrate	17.2 g		6%
Dietary Fiber	0.14 g		1%
Sugars	15.49 g		
Sugar Alcohols			
Protein	3.29 g		
Vitamin A	297.16 IU		6%
Vitamin C	0.75 mg		1%
Calcium	114.92 mg		11%
Iron	0.04 mg		0%