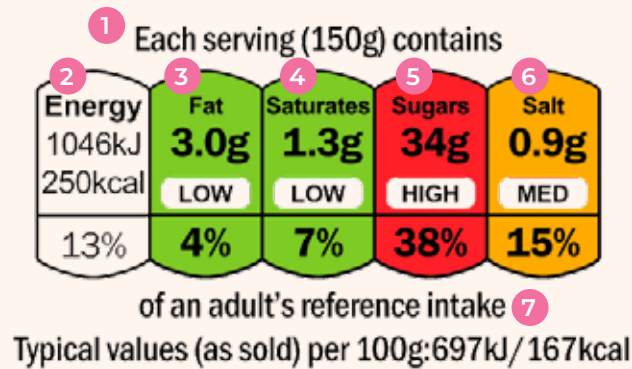


Understanding Calories

It can be helpful to become familiar with the calories in foods you regularly consume, without becoming obsessive.

To start, let's have a look at a food label and understand the nutritional information to help you make mindful choices and eat a balanced diet. Grab a snack and have a look at the nutritional information to understand what it means.



- Serving size** - a serving size is the recommended amount by the UK government. This is different to a portion size, as this is how much you provide yourself.
- Calories** - the total amount of energy in a serving, displayed in kilojoules (kJ) and calories (kcal).
- Fat** - the total amount of fat (included saturated and unsaturated fats) in grams (g).
- Saturated fat**- the fat we should try to cut down on as this can raise our cholesterol.
- Sugar** - the total amount of sugar present. 'Of which sugars' refers to how much of the carbohydrate content of the food or drink comes from sugars (the rest being from starch).
- Salt** - the total amount of salt present.
- Reference intake** - The % of your reference intake this item takes up, as defined by the UK government.

You may have also noticed the traffic light scheme on your label. In general, you should try to eat foods with mostly green labels (low in this nutrient), the occasional amber (neither high nor low in this nutrient), and try to avoid foods with red labels (high in this nutrient).

However, it's important to keep a varied, balanced diet, so if you do have something with a red label, try to have less by reducing your portion.

Finally, grab two snack options and compare their nutritional content. For example, greek yogurt, berries and peanut butter versus a chocolate bar.

Snack	Calories (kcal)	Protein	Fat	Sugar	Salt

Whilst the chocolate bar may seem tempting, because of the higher levels of saturated fats, lower protein and lower fibre content, it will leave you feeling satiated for much less time despite the similar calorie content. Making informed choices to keep yourself fuller for longer will support you on your weight loss journey.