

CHOOSING FOOD PRODUCTS

Packaged foods usually cost more, but sometimes life gets busy, so, it is helpful to know what to look out for.

Food labels tell us a lot about a product, but knowing what is most important and how to read them can help with choosing healthier options.



Using the Health Star Ratings

Health Star Ratings are displayed on the front of some foods in the supermarket. They have two display options, the star rating only or stars and nutrition information.



| ENERGY | SAT FAT | SUGARS | SODIUM | FIBRE |
|--------|---------|--------|--------|-------|
| 1020kJ | 1.0g | 2.1g | 645mg | 8.0g |
| | LOW | LOW | | HIGH |

PER 100g

What are the ratings based on?

- Total energy (kilojoules/calories)
- Saturated fat, sodium (salt) and sugar content
 - Eating too much of these can increase the risk for poor heart health, poor dental health, some cancers and type 2 diabetes
- Fibre, protein, fruit, vegetable, nut and legume content
 - Eating these can increase your overall health

Important tip: When choosing a product it is important to compare like with like i.e., muesli bar with a muesli bar, not a tub of yoghurt with a muesli bar.



Steps to read food labels

Step 1: The per 100g

Use the per 100g column if comparing nutrients in similar food products

Step 2: Total fat

- Generally choose foods with less than 10g per 100g
- *Milk and yoghurt:* less than 2g per 100g
- *Cheese:* less than 15g per 100g

Step 5: Check ingredients

Ingredients are listed from greatest to smallest by weight. Use this to check sugar* and salt.

Nutrition Information

| Servings per package - 16 Serving size - 30g (2/3 cup) | | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| EXAMPLE ONLY | Per Serve | Per 100g |
| Energy | 432kJ | 1441kJ |
| Protein | 2.8g | 9.3g |
| Fat | | |
| Total | 0.4g | 1.2g |
| Saturated | 0.1g | 0.3g |
| Carbohydrates | | |
| Total | 18.9g | 62.9g |
| Sugar | 3.5g | 11.8g |
| Fibre | 6.4g | 21.2g |
| Sodium (salt) | 65mg | 215mg |

Ingredients: cereals (76%) (wheat, oat bran, barley), psyllium husk (11%), sugar*, rice, malt extract, honey, salt, vitamins



Step 3: Sugar*

Check that sugar is not more than 15g per 100g.

Step 4: Sodium (Salt)

Foods with sodium less than 400mg per 100g are good, and less than 120mg per 100g are best.

***Sugar has many other names - find out more here**

If you have any concerns about your child, contact your local [Child and Family Health Nurse service](#), [Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service \(AMIHS\)](#) // [Building Strong Foundations \(BSF\) for Aboriginal Children, Families and Communities](#), or GP.



Health
Hunter New England
Local Health District



HNEkidshealth
Children, Young People & Families



Healthy Beginnings for HNEkidshealth acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work, live and gather, recognising their continuing connection to land, water and community.

We pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging, as well as Aboriginal people who have provided valuable guidance to the development of this project.