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## Reading labels key to healthy eating

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Deciphering food labels can be a challenge — especially when the claims on the front of the package don't always match the "Nutrition Facts" label on the back.

Here are some quick tips on how to read those labels to make healthful choices.

According to Molly Morgan, Registered Dietitian and author of "Supermarket Shopping Guide," you should first review the serving size, to determine how much of the product to eat. If you eat two servings of the item, you need to remember the Nutrition Fact information doubles.

Next look at the saturated fat and trans fat, aiming for the lowest amount possible.

"Glance at sodium. It is a good idea to choose foods that are lower in sodium," Morgan said. "The American Heart Association recommends keeping your sodium intake to less than 2300 mg per day. So if a food has 300 mg, don't get worried and put it back, after all that is only a seventh of your daily intake."

Next it's on to dietary fiber. When selecting grain products, look for two grams or more of dietary fiber per serving. Fiber can help your heart and keep your body "regular."

"Scan the percentage of vitamins and minerals and see what is provided in the food. If there are no additional vitamins and minerals, likely the food is not the best way to spend your calories because it would be considered 'empty calories,' or a food that lacks much beneficial nutrition," she said.

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