

**Turn and look
for healthier food choices**
Want to Learn More?

Check out the following websites:
Centre for Food Safety

www.cfs.gov.hk

Central Health Education Unit,
Department of Health

[www.cheu.gov.hk/eng/info/
otherdiseases.htm](http://www.cheu.gov.hk/eng/info/otherdiseases.htm)



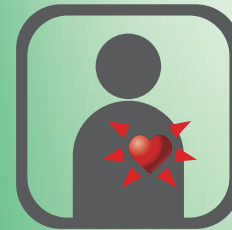
A closer look at
Nutrition Labelling

**HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
and
SODIUM**



HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

According to a local survey conducted in 2003/2004, about 1 in 3 men and 1 in 4 women in Hong Kong have high blood pressure. People with high blood pressure may not know at its early stage of development and yet untreated high blood pressure can lead to heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, etc.



heart attack



stroke



kidney failure

People with high blood pressure can benefit from dietary modifications. Sodium has long been identified as the key factor affecting blood pressure. Lowering the intake of sodium can reduce the risk of developing high blood pressure and control the disease. Other than paying attention to **sodium** intake, one should consume less **saturated fat** and **trans fat** to reduce the risk of developing heart diseases. In addition, the energy, total fat and sugars contents in food should not be missed out especially for those who are overweight.



Is Salt the Same as Sodium?

Salt and sodium is often used interchangeably. In fact, the chemical name of salt is sodium chloride (NaCl). Salt or other sodium-containing food additives, e.g. sodium nitrate and sodium nitrite, are often added to canned food and processed food such as bacon and sausage. Sodium itself also presents naturally in some food like milk and cheese. Majority of sodium intake is from salt.



How Much Sodium Do We Need?

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that the daily intake amount of sodium should not be more than 2000 mg, which approximates to **1 level teaspoon of salt**.



Nutrition Information 營養資料	
Per 100g / 每100克	
Energy/ 能量	398kcal/ 千卡 (1670kJ/ 千焦)
Protein/ 蛋白質	7.5g/ 克
Total fat/ 總脂肪	2.6g/ 克
- Saturated fat/ 飽和脂肪	0.2g/ 克
- Trans fat/ 反式脂肪	0g/ 克
Carbohydrates/ 碳水化合物	86.1g/ 克
- Sugars/ 糖	4.0g/ 克
Sodium/ 鈉	105mg/ 毫克

Use of Nutrition Labelling



From 1st July 2010, nutrition labels on prepackaged food will provide the content information of energy, protein, carbohydrates, total fat, **saturated fat**, **trans fat**, **sodium** and sugars. When reading nutrition labels, attention



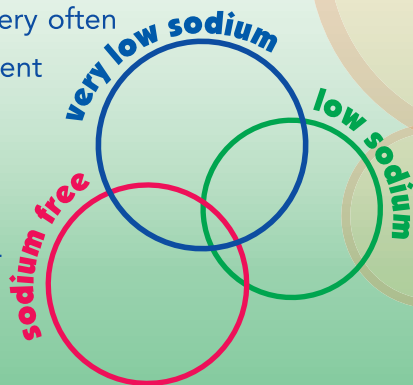
should be paid to the serving size and the actual amount of food to be consumed. If one eats twice the serving size, the energy and nutrient content will be doubled accordingly.

Nutrition claims on a package are always eye-catching, in particular claims on sodium for people with high blood pressure. Products carrying claims on salt should meet the same conditions of claims on sodium, e.g. “low sodium” or “low salt” food should contain not more than 120 mg of sodium per 100 g/mL of food.

Table 1: Specific Conditions for Nutrient Content Claims on Sodium

Claims	Specific conditions (Per 100 g of solid food or Per 100 mL of liquid food)
Low sodium (low salt)	Containing not more than 120 mg of sodium
Very low sodium (very low salt)	Containing not more than 40 mg of sodium
Sodium free (salt free)	Containing not more than 5 mg of sodium

Regardless of the types of nutrition claim that may appear on the package, they only give a rough idea about the content of a particular nutrient, one should not make a food choice solely on the basis of a nutrition claim. Moreover, very often nutrition claims are made for a specific nutrient only. In order to eat healthily, we should take note of other nutrients as well. For example, a product with a “low sodium” claim may have high fat content. The best practice is to refer to the nutrition label for detailed information.



THREE SIMPLE STEPS TO READ NUTRITION LABEL

STEP

1

TAKE NOTE OF THE REFERENCE AMOUNT OF FOOD BEING USED IN THE NUTRITION LABEL

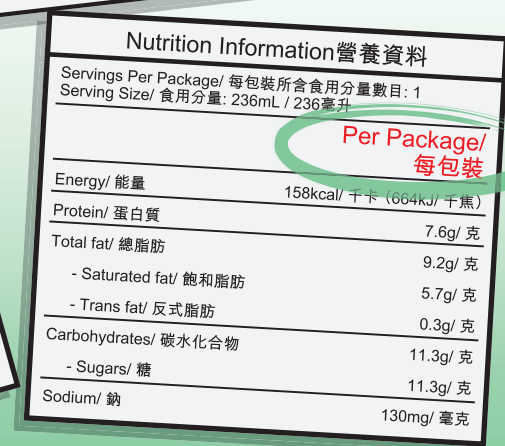
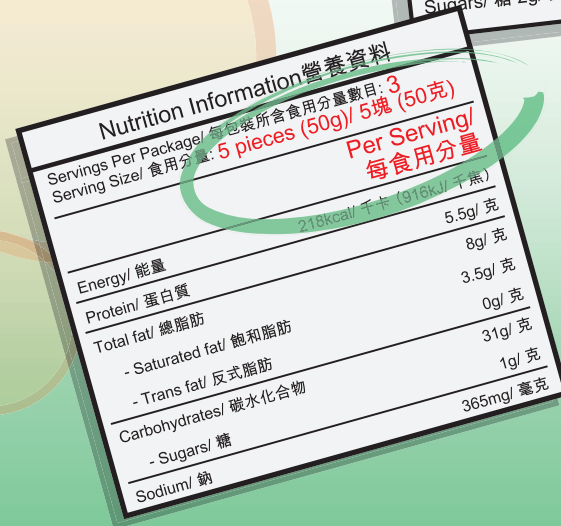
The nutritional content may be expressed in several ways:

per 100 g/mL

per serving

per package

Comparison should be made basing on the same reference amount, e.g. per 100 g versus per 100 g, per 50-gram serving versus per 50-gram serving, but not per 100 g versus per 50-gram serving.



STEP 2

READ AND COMPARE THE NUTRITIONAL CONTENT

Based on the same reference amount of food, comparison can be made among the content of sodium, saturated fat and trans fat of various products. Then choose the one that is lower in **sodium**, and lower in **combined amount of saturated fat and trans fat**. Furthermore, a product with less energy, total fat and sugars would be preferred in case weight maintenance is also an issue.

Question 1: Which is a better choice?

Milk Beverage A:

Nutrition Information 營養資料	
Servings Per Package/ 每包裝所含食用分量數目: 1 Serving Size/ 食用分量: 236mL / 236毫升	
Per Package/ 每包裝	
Energy/ 能量	156kcal/ 千卡
Protein/ 蛋白質	7.8g/ 克
Total fat/ 總脂肪	9.0g/ 克
- Saturated fat/ 飽和脂肪	5.9g/ 克
- Trans fat/ 反式脂肪	0.2g/ 克
Carbohydrates/ 碳水化合物	11g/ 克
- Sugars/ 糖	11g/ 克
Sodium/ 鈉	97mg/ 毫克

Combined amount of saturated fat and trans fat = 6.1 g (5.9 g+0.2 g)

Answer 1:

Milk Beverages A and B have comparable amount of sodium. Milk Beverage B is a better choice as it has much less combined amount of saturated fat and trans fat, energy and total fat in each package (i.e. 236 mL).



Milk Beverage B:

Nutrition Information 營養資料	
Servings Per Package/ 每包裝所含食用分量數目: 1 Serving Size/ 食用分量: 236mL / 236毫升	
Per Package/ 每包裝	
Energy/ 能量	84kcal/ 千卡
Protein/ 蛋白質	8.5g/ 克
Total fat/ 總脂肪	0.2g/ 克
- Saturated fat/ 飽和脂肪	0.2g/ 克
- Trans fat/ 反式脂肪	0g/ 克
Carbohydrates/ 碳水化合物	12g/ 克
- Sugars/ 糖	12g/ 克
Sodium/ 鈉	104mg/ 毫克

Combined amount of saturated fat and trans fat = 0.2 g (0.2 g+0 g)

Q & A

Question 2: Which is a better choice?



Corn Flakes C:

Nutrition Information 營養資料	
Per 100g/ 每100克	
Energy/ 能量	382kcal/ 千卡
Protein/ 蛋白質	8g/ 克
Total fat/ 總脂肪	0.7g/ 克
- Saturated fat/ 飽和脂肪	0.1g/ 克
- Trans fat/ 反式脂肪	0g/ 克
Carbohydrates/ 碳水化合物	86g/ 克
- Sugars/ 糖	8g/ 克
Sodium/ 鈉	800mg/ 毫克

Corn Flakes D:

Nutrition Information 營養資料	
Per 100g/ 每100克	
Energy/ 能量	400kcal/ 千卡
Protein/ 蛋白質	5.3g/ 克
Total fat/ 總脂肪	0.5g/ 克
- Saturated fat/ 飽和脂肪	0.1g/ 克
- Trans fat/ 反式脂肪	0g/ 克
Carbohydrates/ 碳水化合物	93.7g/ 克
- Sugars/ 糖	42g/ 克
Sodium/ 鈉	1100mg/ 毫克

Answer 2:

Corn Flakes C and D have the same combined amount of saturated fat and trans fat and comparable amount of energy and total fat. Corn Flakes C is a better choice as it has less sodium and much less sugars in each 100 g.

STEP 3

REFER TO THE PERCENTAGE NUTRIENT REFERENCE VALUE (%NRV) (IF AVAILABLE)

%NRV is a relative expression of the nutritional content. It tells you whether there is a lot or a little of a nutrient in the stated amount of food on a scale from 0% to 100%. A high percentage means the food contains a lot of a nutrient whereas a low percentage means it contains just a little. In case the %NRV of energy or those nutrients that should be consumed less (e.g. sodium, saturated fat, trans fat, total fat or sugars) is at the high-end, think twice before making the purchase of that particular food product as it is very likely that the food may contribute a great proportion of your daily allowances of these nutrients.

%NRV may come in different terms in nutrition labels. For example, in Hong Kong, a set of NRV is adopted and the energy and nutrient values may be presented as %Chinese NRV. %Daily Value (%DV) or %Daily Intake (%DI) may be used in other places, and their values may be different from those adopted in Hong Kong.

Question 3: Which is a better choice?



Soup E:

Nutrition Information 營養資料		
Servings Per Package/ 每包裝所含食用分量數目: 2 Serving Size/ 食用分量: 200g / 200克		
	Per Serving/ 每食用分量	%Chinese NRV 每食用分量的 中國營養素 參考值百分比
Energy/ 能量	116kcal/千卡	6%
Protein/ 蛋白質	3.2g/克	5%
Total fat/ 總脂肪	7.0g/克	12%
- Saturated fat/ 飽和脂肪	2.0g/克	10%
- Trans fat/ 反式脂肪	0g/克	
Carbohydrates/ 碳水化合物	10g/克	3%
- Sugars/ 糖	2.5g/克	
Sodium/ 鈉	940mg/毫克	47%

Soup F:

Nutrition Information 營養資料		
Servings Per Package/ 每包裝所含食用分量數目: 2 Serving Size/ 食用分量: 200g / 200克		
	Per Serving/ 每食用分量	%Chinese NRV 每食用分量的 中國營養素 參考值百分比
Energy/ 能量	78kcal/千卡	4%
Protein/ 蛋白質	3.0g/克	5%
Total fat/ 總脂肪	1.4g/克	2%
- Saturated fat/ 飽和脂肪	0g/克	0%
- Trans fat/ 反式脂肪	0g/克	
Carbohydrates/ 碳水化合物	13.4g/克	4%
- Sugars/ 糖	3.3g/克	
Sodium/ 鈉	620mg/毫克	31%

Answer 3:

Soup F is a better choice as it has less sodium and energy and much less saturated fat and total fat in each serving (i.e. 200 g).

THIS PAMPHLET IS PREPARED BY THE TASK FORCE ON NUTRITION LABELLING EDUCATION COMPRISING MEMBERS FROM:

- Association of Hong Kong Nursing Staff
- Centre for Health Education and Health Promotion, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Committee on Home-School Co-operation
- Consumer Council
- Department of Health
- Education Bureau
- Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
- Hong Kong Dietitians Association
- Hong Kong Nutrition Association
- Hospital Authority
- The Hong Kong Medical Association

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www.cfs.gov.hk

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