Nutrition Facts Labels Get Helpful Updates

For all of us who are interested in healthier eating, there's a lot to like about the updated Nutrition Facts panels on food labels. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is requiring more complete information that's easier to understand, and thus more helpful when it comes to making informed choices. The new labels debuted in January 2020 on many foods, and all packaged foods will have them by the summer of 2021.

So, what's new? Here are some of the bigger changes you’ll find on the new labels.

The 'Serving Size' information is bigger and bolder, and it takes into account how people really eat. For packages that contain more than one serving — but whose contents are commonly eaten entirely by one person in one sitting — the new labels show nutrition information two ways: for one serving and also for the entire package. That's especially helpful for tempting, not-so-healthy items like a bag of chips, a small multipack of cookies or a pint of ice cream. Seeing this information can help us make smarter choices about how much we choose to eat or serve to others.

Also getting a bigger and bolder treatment on the revamped labels is the 'Calories Per Serving' information. This information can help you balance the number of calories you or your child eat or drink with the number of calories your body uses. (Of course, not all calories are the same! A hard-boiled egg, 10 almonds or nine potato chips contain roughly the same number of calories, but the first two are far healthier choices.)

And speaking of healthier choices, with so many people cutting back on sugar, here's another helpful label change. In addition to showing how much sugar the food contains naturally, a new, separate line reveals how much extra sugar the food maker has added. This is especially helpful for foods like canned soups, pasta sauce, protein bars and breakfast cereals that can be 'hiding' a surprising amount of sugar.

Since kids enjoy guessing games and decoding puzzles, how about letting them test their skills? Have them measure out a single serving of a few different foods, guess the calories, and then figure out which foods deliver the most protein, carbs, dietary fiber, sodium and sugar. They'll quickly discover how nutrition labels can help us make smart choices!

Purchase a Miracle May 1 to June 15
Help support Seattle Children's by shopping for products with the bright green Purchase a Miracle shelf tag May 1 to June 15. Participating retail locations include Albertsons, Bartell Drugs, Fred Meyer, QFC, Safeway and other local grocery stores. When you buy products with the Purchase a Miracle shelf tag, you are helping support cancer research at Seattle Children's.

TO LEARN MORE:
Medicine Safety Basics

Medicines can do all sorts of great things — in the right hands. But used the wrong way or by the wrong person, they can be a dangerous poison. Be sure to store them high enough so that they’re always out of sight and out of reach of young children. Don’t leave bags and purses that contain vitamins or medicines out in the open. Consider a medicine lock box as a simple and secure solution. And when you don’t need a medicine anymore, dispose of it safely. (Visit takebackyourmeds.org to find a take-back location.) Save the Poison Help number in your phone and the phones of your child’s caregivers: 800-222-1222. Call right away if you suspect your child may have ingested something harmful.

TO LEARN MORE:
Visit upandaway.org.

How Booster Seats Prevent Injuries

Washington’s new car-seat laws are now in effect. After a child outgrows their harness-style car seat, they must use a booster seat until they reach 4 feet 9 inches tall, which is when a vehicle’s seat belt should fit correctly. Until then, booster seats correctly position the vehicle’s lap belt low across the hip bones, and the shoulder belt across the center of the shoulder. In a collision, poorly fitting seat belts can cause injuries to the head, neck, spine and internal organs. Because kids’ bodies are still forming, they’re at a greater risk of injury when compared to adults of the same height. For example, a child’s head is much larger in proportion to the rest of the body, which means a greater chance of spinal-cord injury. And a child’s growing skeleton is made of cartilage, which doesn’t protect internal organs the way adult bones do. Many kids will need a booster seat until age 10 to 12 — and before they can safely give it up, they must pass a 5-step test (see the URL below) when seated in your vehicle.

TO LEARN MORE:
Visit wacarseats.com.

Life Jackets for Children and Teens

For kids of all ages, drowning is a leading cause of unintentional injury-related death. And for every child who dies from drowning, even more receive emergency care for injuries related to being underwater.

Life jackets are crucially important in preventing drownings. They must be U.S. Coast-Guard approved (check the label inside) and they must fit properly. Be sure your child’s life jacket is rated for their weight, and that its straps and buckles are adjusted to provide a snug fit. When needed, loaner jackets are great as long as they’re in good condition and they fit well. Wearing a life jacket is an important way to stay safe near and in the water. All children and teens should wear a life jacket any time they are on a boat, raft or inner tube — or are swimming in open water like lakes, rivers or the ocean. Children ages 6 to 11 should also wear a life jacket while on docks and riverbanks; children from birth to 5 years old should wear a life jacket whenever they are in or near water. Keep in mind that many kids (and adults) who drown never even intended to get wet: they fell in the water.

Life jackets are classified as personal flotation devices (PFDs) and are designed to be lifesaving devices. Water wings, flotation belts and kickboards are instructional flotation devices (IFDs) and are not lifesaving devices. IFDs are sometimes used when learning how to swim and should only be used with direct, hands-on adult supervision — with the adult in the water and within touch-distance of the child. Likewise, floating toys like inflatables and foam noodles are fun, but they are not lifesaving devices.

TO LEARN MORE:
Quick Tip

More daylight allows time for more fun, but try to stick to bedtime routines and schedules. Sleep helps growing bodies and minds.

Validating a Child’s Feelings

It can be tough for kids to work through their feelings, and there’s a lot parents can do to help. The simple act of recognizing emotions goes a long way. For example, “I understand that you’re mad that it’s time to leave the playground.” Other useful phrases for kids of all ages include: “I hear you.” “Tell me more.” “I see that you’re frustrated.” “How can I help?” Keep in mind that validating feelings isn’t the same as agreeing with them; we don’t have to be on the same page as our child to hear them out. And role-modeling is important: if we listen and show respect, it’s more likely that our kids will mirror that behavior. Whether they’re toddlers or teens, they want to be heard, understood and accepted — just like we do!

TO LEARN MORE:

Never Shake a Baby

It’s common for babies to cry a lot in their first 5 months. Even healthy babies may cry up to 5 hours a day. Though challenging, it will get better. Usually, crying peaks around 2 to 4 months. Always handle your baby gently. Increased crying is the number-one reason why people shake babies. Violent shaking (even for a few seconds) can cause severe and permanent injuries — and even death. Tell your child’s caregivers these important things:
1) Lots of crying during the first 5 months is normal, and so is feeling frustrated.
2) To call you if the crying becomes difficult to handle. 3) It’s OK to put the baby down in a safe spot and take a break nearby. And remember: if you’re feeling overwhelmed yourself, reach out for help.

TO LEARN MORE:
Visit purplecrying.info.

Trampoline Safety

Trampoline parks have become popular spots to celebrate a child’s birthday or burn energy on a rainy day. With this increased popularity, trampoline injuries are on the rise. Accidents can occur in a number of different ways: failed stunts, colliding with another jumper, landing wrong or falling off. Common injuries include bruises, strains, broken bones and concussions. While injuries can happen in trampoline parks or jump gyms, they’re even more common on home trampolines. In fact, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends not having a home trampoline. However, if you’re OK with the risks involved — whether at home or at a park — the link below has some helpful safety tips.

TO LEARN MORE:
Search ‘trampoline’ at healthychildren.org.

Regional Clinic Locations

• Bellevue
• Everett
• Federal Way
• Olympia
• Tri-Cities
• Wenatchee

Primary Care Clinic

• Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic

Main Hospital Numbers
206-987-2000
866-987-2000 (Toll-free)

Online Resources

Visit seattlechildrens.org for the following:
• Child Health Advice
• my Good Growing email newsletter
• Doctor Finder
• On The Pulse and Autism blogs
• Medical condition information
• Health & safety information
• Ways to help Seattle Children’s
• Research Institute information

Heather Cooper is the Editor of Good Growing, which is produced four times a year by the Marketing Communications Department of Seattle Children’s. You can find Good Growing in the January, April, July and October issues of ParentMap and on our website seattlechildrens.org. For permission to reprint articles for non-commercial purposes or to receive Good Growing in an alternate format, call 206-987-5323. The inclusion of any resource or website does not imply endorsement. Your child’s needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon information, please talk with your child’s healthcare provider. © 2020 Seattle Children’s, Seattle, Washington.
Classes and Events

These classes are popular and often fill up several months in advance, so please register early. Scholarships are available. If you would like to ask about a scholarship, use the contact information for the class you're interested in to connect with the registrar. At the time of publication, the COVID-19 situation is quickly changing. Please check our website for the status of these classes and events before attending to be sure they're still happening.

PARENTING CLASSES

Autism 101

This free 90-minute lecture is designed to provide information and support to parents and families of children recently diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. A portion of each session is dedicated to answering questions from the attendees.

Lectures are in Seattle, once per quarter, on a Thursday from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Lectures are also available via live streaming.

View dates and locations or sign up for live streaming at seattlechildrens.org/autism101. Email Autism101@seattlechildrens.org if you have questions.

Autism 200 Series

Autism 200 is a series of free 90-minute classes for parents and caregivers of children with autism who wish to better understand autism spectrum disorder. Each class features a different topic.

Classes are usually offered on the third Thursday of the month, 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Seattle Children's hospital campus in Seattle. These classes are also available through live streaming.

View dates and topics, sign up for live streaming or view past Autism 200 lectures at seattlechildrens.org/autism200. Email Autism200@seattlechildrens.org if you have questions.

Babysafe

Babysafe is a 4-hour class for new and expectant parents and others who care for babies. Topics include infant development, baby safety, injury prevention and care of common injuries for infants from birth through 12 months of age. Infant CPR is demonstrated and practiced, but this is not a certification class.

This class is offered in Seattle. The fee is $85 and each registration is good for 2 people from the same family. View dates and locations at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-789-2306 if you have questions.

Heartsaver First Aid, CPR and AED

This video-based class for parents and caregivers covers how to treat bleeding, sprains, broken bones, shock and other first-aid emergencies. Also includes infant, child and adult CPR and AED use. Students receive an American Heart Association Heartsaver First Aid, CPR, AED course completion card that is valid for 2 years.

This class is offered at Seattle Children's hospital campus in Seattle for $75 per person. View dates at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-987-2304 if you have questions.

CHILD, PRETEEN AND TEEN CLASSES

Better Babysitters

For youth, ages 11 to 14. Students learn about responsible babysitting, basic child development, infant and child care, safety, handling emergencies, age-appropriate toys, business tips and parent expectations.

This class is offered in Seattle, Bellevue, Everett and Federal Way. The cost is $50 per person. View dates and locations at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-987-9878 if you have questions.

CPR and First Aid for Babysitters

For youth, ages 11 to 15. Topics include pediatric CPR, treatment for choking, and first-aid skills. Students receive an American Heart Association Heartsaver Pediatric First Aid, CPR, AED completion card, which is valid for 2 years.

This class is offered at Seattle Children's hospital campus in Seattle for $75 per person. View dates at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-987-2304 if you have questions.

For Boys: The Joys and Challenges of Growing Up

This class is for boys, 10 to 12 years old, and a parent or trusted adult.

For Girls: A Heart-to-Heart Talk on Growing Up

This class is for girls, 10 to 12 years old, and a parent or trusted adult.

An informal, engaging format is used to present and discuss issues most on the minds of preteens as they begin adolescence: body changes, sex, and other growing-up stuff.

These classes are offered in Seattle, Bellevue, Everett and Federal Way in partnership with Great Conversations. The cost is $90 per parent/child pair; $70 per extra child. A copy of the book "Will Puberty Last My Whole Life?" is included.

View dates and locations at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-789-2306 if you have questions. Content outlines and short videos are available at greatconversations.com.

Sibshops

Sibshops are lively peer support groups for siblings of kids with special needs. Separate sessions are held for kids 6 to 9 years old and kids 10 to 13 years old.

Sessions take place at Seattle Children's hospital campus in Seattle at a cost of $25 per session.

View dates online at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-987-4133.

EVENTS

Free Life Jacket Fitting and Giveaways

WHEN: Saturday, April 4, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
WHAT: Fred Hutch Health and Wellness Fair
WHERE: Rainier Beach Community Center, 8825 Rainier Ave. S, Seattle

WHEN: Saturday, May 16, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
WHAT: Seattle South King Safe Kids Day
WHERE: Renton Community Center, 1715 Maple Valley Hwy., Renton

VISIT: seattlechildrens.org

Children must be ages 1 to 18 and must be present in order to be properly fit and receive a life jacket. Supplies are limited; first-come, first-served.

Free Car Seat Check

WHEN: Saturday, June 6, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
WHERE: Seattle Children's North Clinic, 1815 13th St., Everett

VISIT: seattlechildrens.org/healthfair

Join us as we step into summer with kid-friendly activities and education! This is a free, interactive event for families and includes a bike helmet fitting and giveaway for kids. Children must be ages 1 to 8 and must be present in order to be properly fit and receive a helmet. Supplies are limited; first-come, first-served.

Free Helmet Fitting and Giveaway

WHEN: Saturday, June 20, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
WHERE: Seattle Children's 70th and Sand Point Administrative Building, 6901 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle

VISIT: seattlechildrens.org

Come learn how to safely secure your child in the car. Child passenger safety experts will check your child in a car seat, booster seat or the seat belt and answer any questions you may have. First come, first served. We do not take reservations.

Free Helmet Fitting and Giveaway

WHEN: Saturday, June 27, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
WHAT: Burien's Great Day of Play
WHERE: Mossher Park, 430 S 156th St., Burien
VISIT: MakeSureTheHelmetFits.org

Children must be ages 1 to 18 and must be present in order to be properly fit and receive a helmet. Supplies are limited; first-come, first-served.

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