

Never skip a nutrition panel again

Read and apply nutrition panels
with this 2-step process

Protein/Protéine	100%
Vitamin A/Vitamine A	15%
Vitamin C/Vitamine C	0%
Calcium/Calcium	30%
Iron/Fer	0%
Vitamin D/Vitamine D	45%

Nutrition panels usually come with jargons and a bunch of numbers.

And this makes you skip them.

You don't have to anymore.

Read on to know how to use nutrition panels to make better food decisions with **a simple 2-step process.**

This is going to be a long ride. But it's worth it.

The serving size

It's a measured amount of the food product.

It's usually the *first thing* you see on the panel.

It could be in terms of weight, volume, or other measures.

The image shows a standard Nutrition Facts label. The title 'Nutrition Facts' is in large bold black font, with the French equivalent 'Valeur nutritive' below it. The serving size 'Per 1 cup (250 mL) / par 1 tasse (250 mL)' is highlighted with an orange border. Below this, the label is organized into columns for 'Amount / Teneur' and '% Daily Value / % valeur quotidienne'. The first row shows 'Calories / Calories 80'. The second row shows 'Fat / Lipides 0 g' with a corresponding '0 %' in the right column.

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (250 mL) / par 1 tasse (250 mL)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Teneur	% valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 80	
Fat / Lipides 0 g	0 %

And whatever you see on the panel, is based on this serving size.

Yes, the amount of calories, fats, sugar, sodium,...

They're all based on this serving size.

In most (not all) cases, the total quantity of the product is higher than the serving size.

That is:

total product amount > serving size

Hope you get serving size now. Let's go on...

Other items on the panel

Every food product is unique.
But mostly, you see something like this

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (250 mL) / par 1 tasse (250 mL)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Teneur	% valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 80	
Fat / Lipides 0 g	0 %
Saturated / saturés 0 g + Trans / trans 0 g	0 %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium / Sodium 115 mg	5 %
Carbohydrate / Glucides 12 g	4 %
Fibre / Fibres 0 g	0 %
Sugars / Sucres 11 g	
Protein / Protéines 9 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	15 %

The value beside each item is the **amount per serving**.

In the example, the *80 calories is in 250ml* of the product.

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (250 mL) / par 1 tasse (250 mL)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Teneur	% valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 80	
Fat / Lipides 0 g	0 %
Saturated / saturés 0 g + Trans / trans 0 g	0 %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	

Sometimes, they write the absolute values (like 80 calories, 10g).

Other times, they write percentages.

Or even both (*as in the sample label*).

Calculate to know the real amounts of the nutrients

Before you scroll past, I assure you, this is simpler than it seems.

No need for calculators in the grocery store!!!

Here's an example.
Let's say this is the nutrition panel of your favourite drink.

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (250 mL) / par 1 tasse (250 mL)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Teneur	% valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 80	
Fat / Lipides 0 g	0 %
Saturated / saturés 0 g + Trans / trans 0 g	0 %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium / Sodium 115 mg	5 %
Carbohydrate / Glucides 12 g	4 %
Fibre / Fibres 0 g	0 %
Sugars / Sucres 11 g	
Protein / Protéines 9 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	15 %

The serving size is 250ml.

Let's assume the total volume (the full bottle of drink) is 500ml.

Here's the next thing you should do...

Find how many servings are in the entire product.

In our example, that'll be 2 servings.
How?!

Just **total volume/serving size**
That is: $500\text{ml}/250\text{ml} = 2$

Simple, right? told ya :)

Now, use this “2” to multiply the value of any nutrient you want to know more about.

Easy peezy, lemon squeezy

In this example, the real amount of sugars in the drink is $2 \times 11\text{g} = 22\text{g}$.

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (250 mL) / par 1 tasse (250 mL)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Teneur	% valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 80	
Fat / Lipides 0 g	0 %
Saturated / saturés 0 g + Trans / trans 0 g	0 %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium / Sodium 115 mg	5 %
Carbohydrate / Glucides 12 g	4 %
Fibre / Fibres 0 g	0 %
Sugars / Sucres 11 g	
Protein / Protéines 9 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	15 %

How many calories are in there?
 How about fibre?
 You got it!

valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (250 mL) / par 1 tasse (250 mL)	
Amount Teneur	% Daily Value % valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 80	
Fat / Lipides 0 g	0 %
Saturated / saturés 0 g + Trans / trans 0 g	0 %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium / Sodium 115 mg	5 %
Carbohydrate / Glucides 12 g	4 %
Fibre / Fibres 0 g	0 %
Sugars / Sucres 11 g	
Protein / Protéines 9 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	15 %

Calories = 160kcal, Fibre = 0g

This calculation is very simple.
And you can do it off head.

Without even knowing it!

**Now, here's how to
use this information**

It's ideal you take about 2000 calories of energy per day (for adults).

This varies from person to person. A typical adult range is 1,600 to 3,000 calories.

Source: American Heart Association

Still on how to use the info...

This drink alone is giving you about 160 calories.

This is quite meaningful if you take one bottle.

The daily added sugar recommendation is 25g for women and 36g for men.

Let's assume it's 30g for adults.

This one bottle of drink already contains 22g of sugar :(

You sure will be eating other foods in the day, right?

This one bottle of drink already contains 22g of sugar.

And remember, this is not your full meal.

So you may want to avoid taking anymore of this drink in that day.

We focused on sugar and calories in the above example.

You can repeat this calculation and decision process for other components on the nutrition panel that **you're concerned about.**

Are you checking your protein? Just focus on that while checking the others too just in case.

A product high in protein but low in sodium and high in sugar...? That's where some decision comes in. Now you know it all :)

You might want to reduce:

- saturated fats
- trans fat
- sodium

And you might want to take more of:

- fibres
- proteins
- vitamins

Just a suggestion, not a dietetic advice

This simple calculation helps you figure all these out in a matter of seconds.

You get all this info with just the “2”
You’ll get different values for different products

The good news is,

You just need to **do it once** for a product.

Unless they change the product in any way.

Here's a quick wrap up

Step 1:

Get the # of servings in the product.

Step 2:

Multiply the # of servings by the quantity of nutrient(s) you're concerned about.

Then decide.

That's it!

It was simple, right?

Try it when next you're purchasing a food product.

Your Next Step

Making food choices that work for you goes beyond nutrition panels to budgeting decisions, knowing what snacks to take and many more. But it doesn't have to be overwhelming. You can explore more easy-to-digest info on our website, download other guides or join our growing community of consumers who are making food choices that suits their needs.

1

Check the articles

There are many detailed and fun articles you can explore on our website. Filter by categories or tags to get exactly what you need.

Visit: foodpulse.co/articles

2

Get more guides

We have a variety of free and paid guides you can download from our website to support your food decisions.

Visit: foodpulse.co/guides

3

Join our growing community

If you want real experiences, research-backed insights and practical steps to master your food decisions, then join our growing community of consumers who want to know more. Emails come once a month only.

Subscribe here: foodpulse.co/newsletter

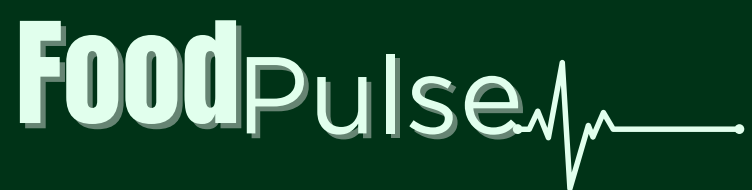


Etornam C. Tsyawo

Nice to meet you. I'm a Food Research Engineer with a generous passion for healthy food and the one behind FoodPulse. I'm also a Doctoral Researcher at SASEL Lab, McGill University. I've been on the path of food for almost a decade now. My work has helped people gain meaningful insights into their food choices, improve their food habits and navigate the food system better even when faced with time and financial constraints. One of my proudest moments was hearing from a reader who successfully reduced his processed sugar intake thanks to my content. I love cooking, gardening and reading. And oh, taking walks is a thing too.



Healthy Food, Happier YOU



www.foodpulse.co