

Child Care Menu Planning with Canada's Food Guide

Using Food Labels

Using food labels can help you choose healthy foods for your childcare program. Food packages in Canada include a Nutrition Facts table, an ingredient list and food allergen labelling.

Nutrition Facts table

Look at the % Daily Value (DV) on the Nutrition Facts table to see if there is a little or a lot of a nutrient.

- **5% DV or less is a little.** Aim for lower % DV for nutrients like sodium (salt), sugars, and saturated fat.
- **15% DV or more is a lot.** Aim for higher % DV for nutrients like iron, fiber, calcium, and potassium.

Ingredient list

The ingredient list tells you all the ingredients in a food product, listed by weight from most to least.

Nutrition Facts	
Per 12 crackers (30 g)	
	% Daily Value*
Calories 107	
Fat 1 g	1 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
+Trans 0 g	
Carbohydrate 27 g	
Fibre 1 g	4 %
Sugars 3 g	3 %
Protein 3 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 370 mg	16 %
Potassium 50 mg	1 %
Calcium 10 mg	1 %
Iron 2 mg	11 %

*5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot

Ingredients: White beans, Water, Sugars, Pork, Salt, Modified cornstarch, Onion powder, Mustard, Spices
Contains: Mustard. **May contain:** Sesame, Soybean

Food allergens

Food labels in Canada must clearly list common (priority) allergens and gluten sources. If a common allergen has been added to a food, a “Contains” statement must be on the label. May contain statements are not required or checked by Health Canada. Look for allergens in the **ingredient list** or in a **“Contains” statement** after the ingredient list. Common allergens must be in the “Contains” statement if they are in a food.

These allergens are:

- Eggs
- Fish
- Crustaceans and mollusks
- Milk
- Mustard
- Peanuts
- Sesame seeds
- Soy
- Sulphites
- Tree nuts
- Wheat and triticale

If a child has an allergy to a food that is not in the list above, that food will not be in the “contains” statement. You will need to look in the ingredient list. If you are unsure if a food is safe for a child with allergies in your center, talk to their parent or caregiver.

For more information visit: [Food labels](#) or [Food Allergy Canada](#)

