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## Label Claims

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# Label Claims

Food claims can be used on food packages. They can be health claims, nutrient claims or function claims.

**Health Claims** describe a link between a nutrient and a disease or health-related condition. A food must meet certain nutrient levels to make a health claim.

## Examples of health claims

Health claim	May help prevent
High in calcium	Osteoporosis
Low in sodium	High blood pressure
Low in fat, saturated fat, cholesterol	Cancer and heart disease
High in fiber	
High in vitamins A and C, whole grain foods	
High in folate (folic acid)	Birth defects
Low in sugar	Tooth decay

**Nutrient Claims** describe the level of a nutrient in the food, such as “free,” “high,” and “low.” They can also compare the level

of a nutrient in one food to that of another food, such as “reduced,” “more,” and “light.” An example of this would be “Light Wheat Bread,” which must contain 25 percent fewer calories than regular wheat bread. “Reduced Fat Oatmeal Cookies” must contain 25 percent less fat than the regular oatmeal cookies. A Daily Value of 5 percent or less is “low” and 20 percent or more is “high” for a nutrient.

## Meanings of nutrient claims

Nutrient claim	Meaning
Free	Contains none
High	Meets 20% or more of the daily value for a 2,000 calorie diet
Low	Meets 5% or less of the daily value for a 2,000 calorie diet
Reduced	Contains 25% less than the regular product
Light	Provides 25% fewer calories than the regular product

These claims can be divided into six parts: calories, fat, cholesterol, sodium, fiber and sugar. You may want to know only about one part or all six.

## Clues to nutrients

If you are concerned with	Look for
Being overweight	Calorie free, reduced calorie, low calorie, light or lite
Fat intake	Fat free, low fat, reduced fat
Cholesterol	Cholesterol free, low cholesterol, low in saturated fat, saturated fat free
Sodium	Sodium free, salt free, low sodium, light in sodium
Fiber	High fiber, whole grains
Sugar	Sugar free, reduced sugar

**Note:** Label claim definitions are based on the standard serving size for the product, which is indicated on the label.

**Function Claims** refer to the role of a nutrient in the body. For example:

- Regular weight bearing physical activity and a healthy diet with plenty of calcium help maintain good bone health and may reduce the chances for osteoporosis (brittle bones).
- Diets low in sodium may reduce the risk of high blood pressure.
- A diet low in total fat may reduce the risk of some cancers.
- Low fat diets rich in fiber may reduce the risk of some types of cancer. Fiber is found in fruits, vegetables and grain products.
- Diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. This is why it is important to eat fruits, vegetables and grain products.
- Healthful diets with enough folic acid may reduce a woman's risk of having a child with a brain or spinal cord defect.
- Eating foods high in sugars and starches promotes tooth decay. Try not to eat these types of foods between meals.

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