Label Power

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Label Power

Today’s nutrition label contains truthful information in a standard format. It makes comparing products fairly easy. If a health claim is on a food package, you can believe it. The food label law makes sure that the facts are correct.

What Is on a Package?
- Product name
- Nutrition Facts
- Ingredient list
- Health claims, such as “high in fiber” or “low in fat”
- Handling instructions, such as “Keep Refrigerated”
- Name and address of the maker
- Net Weight

Sample nutrition label.

Looking at the Basics of the Nutrition Facts
- Serving Size: the amount of food analyzed for the Nutrition Facts label
- Servings Per Container: number of servings in this package
- Calories: the energy supplied in one serving
- Calories from fat: the number of calories coming from fat sources per serving
- Required Nutrient Data: details about fat, cholesterol, sodium, fiber, sugar, protein, and some vitamins and minerals
**Know What You Are Buying**

There is more to a label than the Nutrition Facts. Product weight and ingredients are also important points.

Size can be misleading. Compare the weight of like food items. Are they the same? Can you think of a food product that commonly comes in an oversized bag or box?

Ingredients tell you what is in a product. They are listed by weight, starting with the largest amount down to the smallest amount. Are you getting quality food or just more water, sugar or fillers?

Take a close look at the ingredient list of these three grape beverages. They are all for 48 ounces of product. All three look the same in a glass. Compare their ingredients for the real story.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grape Beverages</th>
<th>Ingredients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grape Juice</td>
<td>Grape juice from concentrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grape Drink</td>
<td>Water, sugar, grape juice concentrate, citric acid, natural flavors and artificial colors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powdered Grape Drink</td>
<td>Citric acid, natural and artificial flavors, sugar, artificial color</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use the grape beverages table to answer the following questions:

- Which product contains mostly water?
- Which product contains mostly grape juice?
- Which product contains no grape juice?
- How would each of these drinks fit into the Food Pyramid?

**Labels Are For You**

Information is power. Labels help you to:

- Make informed choices
- Choose foods for their health benefits
- Compare similar products
- Save money
- Plan a healthy diet