

WHAT THE LABEL TELLS YOU CHALLENGE



This awareness raising, educational activity encourages employees to explore the nutritional value of a typical workplace lunch:

- Buy a range of lunch time foods and snacks and show them to a group of employees.
- Discuss what nutritional values you think each food has.
- Use the worksheets provided to discover the nutritional content of the foods and put these in to context.

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WHAT THE LABEL TELLS YOU CHALLENGE INTRODUCTION



This is an interactive and fun challenge that delivers a serious message about the eatwell guide model of healthy eating. All or part of the challenge can be easily incorporated into a team meeting.

Challenge objective

To explore the nutritional value of typical workplace lunches.

Challenge details

The challenge takes about one hour. It can be run at lunchtime while participants eat their lunch. Up to 12 people can take part.

You will need:

- a range of typical workplace lunchtime foods – for example, pre-packaged sandwiches, chocolate bars, crisps and yoghurt
- copies of the information sheet on Reading food labels
- a meeting room or suitable space for team discussion.

Before the challenge

The facilitator buys a range of typical lunchtime foods and snacks. Make it realistic by buying them from food providers in the local area. The facilitator should familiarise himself or herself with the nutritional value of the foods to be used.

During the challenge

As an introduction, ask the group what information they currently take from food labels – if any. The facilitator chooses eight foods from the selection provided and asks the group to put them in order in terms of their salt content (from lowest to highest). At this stage they should not be looking at food labels, but should be just guessing the order.

The facilitator re-organises the foods based on their actual salt content and notes the contribution that each food would make to the recommendations for maximum daily salt intake for adults of 6g per day.

Using the guidelines on the Reading food labels sheet for 'A lot of salt' and 'A little salt' (see the next page), the group can discuss the outcomes of their initial assessment.

Make use of visual aids such as an actual teaspoon of salt to get the messages across. 1 level teaspoon is about 5g.

Repeat the exercise for sugar, fat, saturated fat, or calorie content.

In pairs, ask the group to choose a range of foods that they would typically choose for their lunch. They then complete the form (provided) to calculate the nutritional value of their choices and compare the results with the reference intake (RI). Remember that this may be the first time that some delegates have read food labels, so you may need to spend some time explaining what each value represents.

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WHAT THE LABEL TELLS YOU CHALLENGE READING FOOD LABELS

Use the information on food labels on your lunchtime foods and drinks to find out how many calories and how much fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt there is in each one. Add up the totals and then compare these with the reference intakes shown below.

Nutritional counter

Food	Calories	Fat	Saturated fat	Sugar	Salt or Sodium

Reference Intakes (RI)

Food	Energy	Fat	Saturates	Sugar	Salt or Sodium
Women	2,000kcal	70g	20g	90g	6g

RIs for calories, fat, saturates, sugars and salt are the maximum amounts you should consume in a day. The figures are based on an average sized adult woman doing an average amount of physical activity. The guideline daily amounts above are just a guide and values will vary depending, for example, on a person's age and the amount of activity they do.

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WHAT THE LABEL TELLS YOU CHALLENGE A LITTLE OR A LOT?



To find out if a product has 'a lot' or 'a little' of each nutrient, look at the 'per 100g' information on the label, and compare it with the information in the box below. This tells you if the product has 'a lot' or 'a little' of each nutrient in it.

	A little	A lot
Fat	below 3g	over 17.5g
Saturated fat	below 1.5g	over 5g
Sugars	below 5g	over 22.5g
Salt	below 0.3g	over 1.5g

Colour coded labels

Food labels may also contain red, amber and green colour coding, which will help you see at a glance if the food you're about to eat has a high, medium or low amount of fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt in 100g of the food. You can also see how much of each of these nutrients there is in a portion or serving of the food.

Red = Try to limit foods that have a red light on the packet, or balance them with healthier options.

Amber = These are OK choices most of the time, but try to balance them with more 'green' options.

Green = A green light indicates a healthier choice.

The colour coding makes it easier to compare foods and can help you get the balance right by helping you swap to healthier products.

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