



British Heart  
Foundation

**This label  
could change  
your life**



**How food labels can  
protect your heart**

**FIGHT  
FOR EVERY  
HEARTBEAT**

bhf.org.uk

A healthy diet helps you beat heart disease.

And it's easy: just read the colour-coded labels on your food and drink. They'll help you choose which foods to shop, and which to drop. Helping you do right by your heart.

**FOOD LABEL DECODER**  
ALL MEASURES AS 100G/ML

	FAT	SATURATES	SUGARS	SALT
<b>LOW</b> HEALTHIER CHOICE	3g or less	1.5g or less	5g or less	0.3g or less
<b>MEDIUM</b> OK MOST OF THE TIME	3.1g to 17.5g	1.6g to 5g	5.1g to 22.5g	0.31g to 1.5g
<b>HIGH</b> JUST OCCASIONALLY	More than 17.5g	More than 5g	More than 22.5g	More than 1.5g

## Introducing the food label decoder

Use this card to work out what's high, medium and low in fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt.

- Green labels mean the food is **LOW** in one of the above, so will be the healthiest choice.
- Amber means **MEDIUM**, which is fine as part of a balanced diet.
- Red means the food is **HIGH** in something, so try not to eat too much of that.



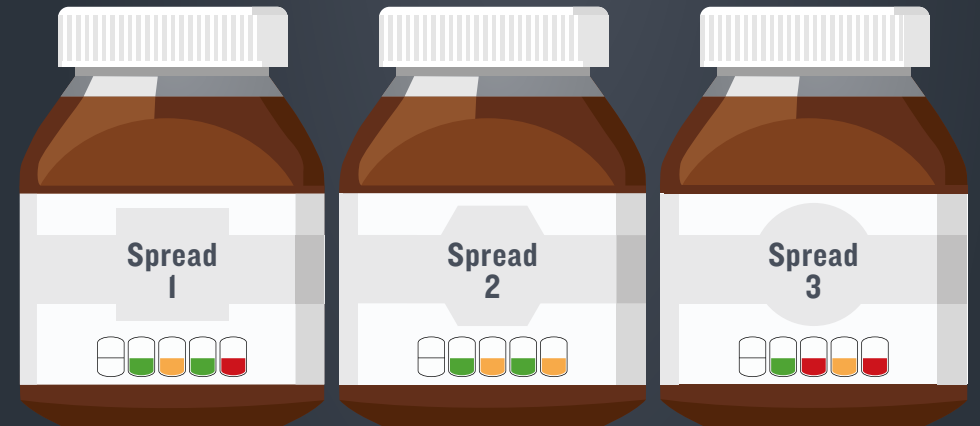
## When to use it

### At the supermarket

Check, compare and choose healthier options for the foods you buy while shopping.

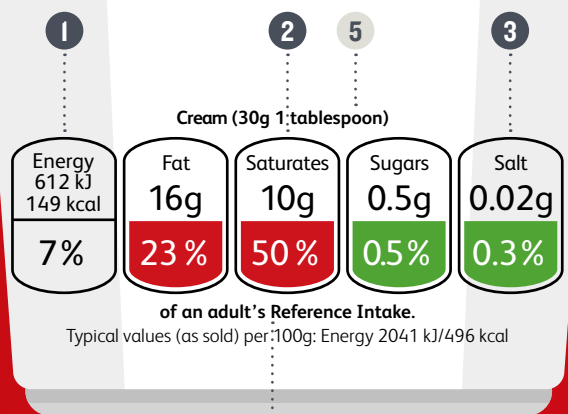
### At home

Make a list of those foods with mostly red labels. Take the list shopping with you and find healthier alternatives.





# How the label works



**These labels give you a nutritional snapshot for each serving size and cooking method. Which helps you make the right choice.**

## 1 Energy

The terms 'kJ' and 'kcal' tell you how much energy is in a product. Women need an average of 2,000 kcal a day to be healthy. Men need 2,500 kcal on average. Children need less. Energy is the white box on the colour-coded label.

## 2 Saturates

These tell you the amount of saturated fat. 'Saturates' and 'saturated fat' mean the same thing. Lower saturated fat means lower risk of cardiovascular disease.

## 3 Hidden Salt

Lower salt levels help you avoid higher blood pressure, reducing your risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Salt is often hidden in everyday foods: watch out.

## 4 Reference Intake

'RI' means 'reference intake'. This has replaced the 'recommended daily amount' (RDA). The %RI tells you how much of your daily healthy maximum is in the portion.

The %RI for an adult is based on the following values:

kcal	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
2000	70g	20g	90g	6g

## What else should you know

### 5 What is a serving?

The portion sizes given on a pack may be less than you'd usually eat.

Some packs also show the amount of each nutrient in 100g of the product. This will always be given in grams or millilitres.



**What's in food varies enormously between brands.**

For foods you eat in large amounts, make an extra effort to check the labels and swap to healthier products.

# CHECK

the things you buy regularly

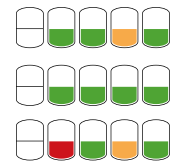
# COMPARE

them with others

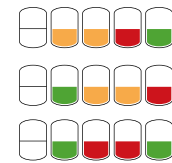
# CHANGE

to healthier options

Next time you go shopping aim for as many greens as possible



Nice and healthy.



Okay. Could be healthier.



Uh-oh. Time for a change.

## Does red always mean stop?

Usually, yes. But there are some exceptions. For example, cheese is a good source of calcium and protein, even though it's high in fat. And nuts are high in healthy unsaturated fats. So you don't need to cut out cheese and nuts altogether. But you should eat less of them, or eat them less often.

## POPCORN INGREDIENTS

**TOFFEE (81%)**  
**GLUCOSE SYRUP**  
**SUGAR**  
**BUTTER**  
**HYDROGENATED**  
**VEGETABLE OIL**  
**SINGLE CREAM (1%)**  
**SALT**  
**EMULSIFIER (SOYA LECITHIN)**  
**COLOUR (PLAIN CARAMEL)**

POPPING CORN  
CONTAINS SULPHITES.  
MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF NUT.

### Nutrition

Typical values	100g contains	per 25g	% RI*	RI* for an average adult
Energy	1780kJ 420kcal	445kJ 105kcal	5%	8400kJ 2000kcal
Fat	9.0g	2.3g	3%	70g
of which saturates	1.9g	0.5g	3%	20g
Carbohydrate	81.3g	20.3g		
of which sugars	66.1g	16.5g	18%	90g
Protein	2.1g	0.5g		
Salt	1.4g	0.3g	5%	6g

## No colour-coding? No problem

You can still use the nutritional details on the back-of-pack to see how healthy something is.

### 1 Use the food label decoder

Our decoder translates nutritional values from back-of-pack labels into green, amber or red. Use the values per 100g/ml, not the 'per portion' ones.

### 2 Use the ingredients list

Most pre-packed foods also show a list of ingredients. They're listed in order, from biggest amount to smallest. So if the first few ingredients are high-fat things like cream, butter or oil, then the food is a high-fat food. A healthier option would be better for your heart.



## UNDERSTANDING FOOD NUTRITION CLAIMS

**LIGHTER**

**LOW SALT**

**LOW AND  
REDUCED FAT**

Low fat means that there is no more than 3g fat per 100g, reduced fat means that the product is at least 30% lower in fat than the standard version of the product.

**LIGHT / LITE**

These terms always mean that a product is at least 30% lower in one value than the standard product. It could be the calorie or fat content that's 30% lower.

**FAT  
FREE**

**SUGAR  
FREE**

**NO ADDED SUGAR**

"No added sugar" or "unsweetened" refer to sugar or sweeteners that are added as ingredients. They do not mean that the food contains no sugar. A food that has "no added sugar" might still taste sweet and can still contain ingredients that are naturally high in sugar such as fruit or milk.

In our fight for every heartbeat, we fund research into how nutrients affect your heart, and make that as clear and simple as possible to help you and your family look after your hearts.

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Join our fight and start making small changes today to protect your heart for the rest of your life.

Visit [bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk) for more information

**TEXT 'FIGHT' TO 70707**

to donate £3 to fund our life-saving research.

**CHANGE YOUR LIFE.  
JOIN HEART MATTERS.**

Heart Matters is the free membership service from the British Heart Foundation providing you with a bi-monthly magazine, a helpline and a recipe finder. All Heart Matters recipes have a green light for their saturated fat and salt content.

Join for free today at [bhf.org.uk/heart](http://bhf.org.uk/heart)



**British Heart  
Foundation**

Coronary heart disease is the UK's single biggest killer.

For over 50 years we've pioneered research that's transformed the lives of people living with heart and circulatory conditions. Our work has been central to the discoveries of vital treatments that are changing the fight against heart disease.

But so many people still need our help.

From babies born with life-threatening heart problems to the many Mums, Dads and Grandparents who survive a heart attack and endure the daily battles of heart failure.

Join our fight for every heartbeat in the UK. Every pound raised, minute of your time and donation to our shops will help make a difference to people's lives.

**FIGHT  
FOR EVERY  
HEARTBEAT**

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