

READING NON-DAIRY MILK LABELS

It's important to read the labels of non-dairy milks because the nutritional content varies widely among products. Below are questions to keep in mind as you read non-dairy milk labels and an example of what a non-dairy milk label may look like.

Nutrition Facts	
About 8 servings per container	
Serving size 1 cup (240mL)	
Amount per serving	
Calories 100	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 3.5g	4%
Saturated Fat 0.5g	3%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 2g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0.5g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 85mg	4%
Total Carbohydrate 11g	4%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 9g	
Includes 8g Added Sugars	16%
Protein 6g	12%
Vitamin D 3mcg 15% • Calcium 450mg 30%	
Iron 1.1mg 6% • Potassium 300mg 6%	
Vitamin A 150mcg 15% • Riboflavin 0.4mg 30%	
Folate 40mcg DFE 10% • Vitamin B ₁₂ 3mcg 120%	
Phosphorus 80mg 6% • Magnesium 40mg 10%	
*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Ingredients:

Soy milk (Filtered Water, Soybeans), Cane Sugar, Vitamin And Mineral Blend (Calcium Carbonate, Vitamin A Palmitate, Vitamin D2, Riboflavin [B2], Vitamin B12), Sea Salt, Natural Flavor, Gellan Gum, Sodium Ascorbate (To Protect Freshness).

What is the serving size?

How many calories are there per serving?

Some non-dairy milks can have 150+ calories per 1 cup serving, which is about the same amount of calories as 1 cup of whole milk. A product is considered low calorie if it has 40 calories or less per serving.

Does the fat content meet your nutritional goals?

Evidence suggests that it may be heart healthy to replace foods that are high in saturated fat levels with unsaturated fats. Limit saturated fat to less than 10 percent of calories a day. Aim for products that have 5 percent or less Daily Value (DV) for saturated fat. Percent Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of the food contributes to a total daily diet. *Trans* fats should be avoided.

Is it low in sodium?

A low sodium food has <140mg sodium per serving, according to the FDA. High sodium diets are a risk factor for stroke, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

Does it contain protein or fiber?

Protein and fiber are beneficial for a number of reasons. For example, both protein and fiber can help with satiety, keeping us full and satisfied.

We can see from the example label that this product is a good source of protein, and it even contains a little fiber.

Does it contain any added sugar?

It's important to limit added sugar in our diet. Eating less added sugar may help reduce your risk for chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes.

Added sugar goes by many names, some common types are: cane sugar, corn syrup, honey, brown rice syrup, and evaporated cane juice.

You can find out if a product has added sugar by looking at the nutrition facts and the ingredients list. In this example label, cane sugar is the second ingredient. Ingredients are listed by weight, so cane sugar is the second most abundant ingredient in this product which may be high in added sugar. An important fact to keep in mind when reading nutrition labels is that 4 grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon of sugar.

Is it fortified?

Fortifying means adding in nutrients that don't occur naturally in the food. By looking at the nutrition label and the ingredients list, we can see that this sample product is fortified with several different vitamins and minerals. Many non-dairy milks are fortified with calcium, to make them more comparable nutritionally to cow's milk.



READING NON-DAIRY MILK LABELS

A Nutritional Comparison of Non-Dairy Milk Alternatives and Dairy Milk

The chart below allows you to compare nutrient content of common non-dairy milk alternatives with dairy milk.

Non-Dairy Milks and Cow's Milk Comparison

Nutrition information for UNSWEETENED non-dairy milks provided by national brands
Serving size: One cup (8 ounces)

Milk	Calories	Fat (grams)	Fiber (grams)	Protein (grams)
Skim Milk	83	0	0	8
1% Cow's Milk	103	2.4	0	8
2% Cow's Milk	125	4.8	0	8
Almond Milk	30	2.5	1	1
Coconut Milk (carton/boxed)	40	4	0	0
Hemp Milk	70	5	2	3
Oat Milk	130	2.5	2	4
Rice Milk	120	2.5	0	1
Soymilk	80	4	1.2	7
Cashew Milk	25	2	0	1

