



Health & Nutrient Label Claims



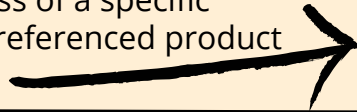
The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorizes three types of health label claims: nutrient content, health, and structure/function. The intention of these claims is to inform and market to consumers based on scientific evidence supporting the health impact of product ingredients.

Nutrient Content Claims

A label claim that describes the nutritional content of a product such as "free" or "low". These claims can only be made for nutrients with an established percent daily value (%DV).

Comparing nutrient levels in a specific product

- **Light/Lite:** at least 33% fewer calories or 50% less fat, sodium, or sugar
- **Reduced:** at least 25% less of a specific nutrient compared to a referenced product
- **Free or Low:** see table



Nutrient Levels per Serving

	"Free"	"Low"
Calories	< 5 calories	< 40 calories
Fat	< 0.5 grams	=/< 3 grams
Saturated Fat	< 0.5 grams	=/< 1 gram
Cholesterol	< 2 milligrams	< 20 milligrams
Sodium	< 5 milligrams	=/< 140 milligrams
Sugar	< 0.5 grams	=/< 3 grams

Health Claims

A label claim that relates a specific food or food component to lowering the risk of disease or health-related condition

All health claims must:

- Be limited to disease or health-related condition risk reduction claims
- Not suggest diagnosis, cure, mitigation or treatment of disease
- Be evaluated and approved by the FDA prior to use and marketing



Example: The consumption of oats lowers cholesterol and is therefore a "Heart Healthy" food

Structure/Function Claims

Label claims that provides general health information in relation to the product. These are less stringently regulated by the FDA but a company has to provide evidence supporting their claim before it is approved.

Examples: "Calcium Builds Strong Bones" or "Antioxidants Help Boost the Immune System"

The Percent Daily Value (%DV)

A percentage of nutrients in a single serving size of food, generally based off a 2,000-calorie adult diet

LABEL	%DV OF NUTRIENT	NUTRIENT NOTES
High	20% or more	Nutrients that generally should be "high" or "good source of" are fiber, vitamins, minerals (calcium, iron, potassium)
Good Source Of	10 - 19%	
Low	5% or lower	Nutrients that generally should be "low" are saturated fats, sodium and added sugars

When something is reduced or removed in a product, something may be added for flavor (fat free items may have increased sugar). Some nutrients, such as protein, trans fats and total sugars, do not have a %DV reported on the label.

For more information, visit [MSU Extension's Food Label Claims page](https://www.canr.msu.edu/tag/food-label-claims)

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