Demystifying FDA Nutrition Labels



Protein

Protein information is located in the same spot on the new FDA nutrition fact label as it is on the old one.

Protein is essential for maintaining muscle mass. Our body also uses it to make any glucose we aren't getting from carbohydrates. When purchasing food, read nutrition labels and choose some products for protein. But consider the fat grams when doing so. Many foods rich in protein are also high in saturated fat. Dairy products considered good for protein may also contain high amounts of trans fat. Food labels can help you make informed decisions.



If you don't eat much protein, keep an eye on it. You don't want to end up losing muscle mass. The National Academy of Sciences recommends we get ten to thirty-five percent of our calories from protein.

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Vitamins and minerals

Information on vitamins and minerals is sparse on nutrition labels. The daily value of vitamins A and C, calcium, and iron were required on the old label, although specific amounts were not listed.

The FDA requires the new label to list vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium. Vitamin D and potassium are included because if you have insufficient quantities of them in your diet, it can increase your risk of chronic disease. Vitamin D also contributes to better bone health.

Potassium helps reduce high blood pressure.

In the new label, vitamins and minerals must also show the amounts of each in the food.

Vitamins A and C are no longer listed since deficiencies in those vitamins is now rare.

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