

# Feed ME: Bringing Food Education to Maine Schools

## Lesson 4

Approximate teaching time: 30-45 minutes

Teachers will need:

- Lesson 4 Plan
- Lesson 4 Slideshow, includes a sample nutrition label (*Eat Well and Keep Moving*, 2001)
- Reading the Food Label Handout (*Eat Well and Keep Moving*, 2001)
- Three different bottled beverages with nutrition labels for each group of three (one bottled beverage should be water)
- Blank paper

This lesson will enable students to:

- Explain what a serving size is;
- Locate serving size, servings per container, nutrients, fiber, sugar, calories, calories from fat, percent daily value, and ingredients on a nutrition label;
- Use a nutrition label to determine what percentage of calories are calories from fat;
- Compare drinks using their nutrition labels;
- Recognize the importance of drinking water instead of sweetened beverages.

This lesson meets these national and state standards:

### Maine State Learning Results, Health Education Grades 3-5

- ✓ A1, Healthy Behaviors and Personal Health: Students explain the relationship between healthy behaviors and personal health.
- ✓ A6, Basic Health Concepts: Students define basic health concepts related to ... nutrition.
- ✓ F1, Decision Making: Students apply decision-making steps to enhance health. A. Identify health-related situations that might require a thoughtful decision. C. Choose a healthy option when making a decision.

### CDC's Healthy Behavior Outcomes

- ✓ HBO 4. Drink plenty of water every day.
- ✓ HBO 6. Limit food and beverages high in added sugars, solid fat, and sodium.

### CDC's Grades 3-5 Knowledge Expectations

- ✓ HE 1.5.5: Identify nutritious and non-nutritious beverages.
- ✓ HE 1.5.7: Identify foods that are high in fat and low in fat.
- ✓ HE 1.5.9: Identify foods that are high in added sugars.
- ✓ HE 1.5.10: Identify foods that are high in sodium.

Key:

Normal font → script

*Italicized font* → actions

**Bold font** → questions

### Nutrition Labels

(*How to Teach Nutrition to Kids* inspired this lesson.)

#### **Slide 1**

*Distribute Reading the Food Label Handout. Refer to serving size and servings per container on Slide 1.*

When I talked about the food pyramid during our last lesson, I mentioned serving sizes. A serving size is a measurement of food. It helps you figure out how much you should eat at a meal or snack so that your body gets the right amount of nutrients. I said that serving sizes can be tricky to understand because they are different for different foods. The easiest way to check the serving size of a food is to look at its nutrition label. Nutrition labels are charts on packaged foods that give you information about that food. The first thing that you should look at on a nutrition label is the serving size and the number of servings in the container. Sometimes a packaged food looks like it has one serving, but it actually has several servings. By looking at a food's nutrition label, you can make sure that you eat the right amount of it. Any measurement that you see on a nutrition label is based on one serving.

**What is the serving size in this box of macaroni and cheese?**

**How many servings are in this box of macaroni and cheese?**

*Refer to nutrients on Slide 1.*

Nutrition labels include four nutrients: vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron. We talked about these nutrients during our last lesson on fruits and vegetables. Just because a food has these four nutrients does not mean that it does not have other important nutrients. In fact, if a food contains these nutrients, it probably has other important nutrients too!

**Can you find the nutrients on this nutrition label? How much vitamin A is in one serving of macaroni and cheese? Vitamin C? Calcium? Iron?**

*Refer to fiber and sugar on Slide 1.*

Nutrition labels also tell you how much fiber and sugar is in one serving of a food. Fiber helps keep you full and aids in digestion, so it is good for your body. Remember when we talked about sugar in the Food Pyramid? Sugar is at the top of the pyramid, so you want to choose foods that do not have a lot of sugar. We will compare sugar in different drinks later on in this lesson.

**How much sugar is in one serving of macaroni and cheese?**

*Refer to calories and calories from fat on Slide 1.*

The number of calories in one serving of a food is also on the nutrition label. Calories are a way to measure the amount of energy that a food gives you. Calories in food come from carbohydrates, protein, or fat. When you want to figure out if a food is healthy for you, it is helpful to look at its calories from fat. You should try to avoid eating foods that have more than thirty percent calories from fat because

eating too much fat is not good for you. Let's try to calculate how many calories from fat are in a serving of macaroni and cheese.

**How many calories are in one serving of macaroni and cheese?**

**How many calories from fat are in one serving of macaroni and cheese?**

*Write out this math on the board.*

To find the percentage of calories in macaroni and cheese that are calories from fat, we take the calories from fat (110) and divide it by the total calories (250). Our answer is .44. We multiply .44 by 100 to get the percentage. Forty-four percent of the calories in one serving of macaroni and cheese are calories from fat.

**Does one serving of macaroni and cheese have more or less than the recommended percentage of calories from fat?**

*Refer to percent daily values on Slide 1.*

Nutrition labels also show us something called percent daily values. Percent daily values show us how eating one serving of a food affects our nutrient intake for the day. For example, one serving of macaroni and cheese gives you twenty percent of your daily value of sodium, or salt. If a food has a percent daily value of less than five percent of a nutrient, it is considered to be low in that nutrient. If a food has a percent daily value of a nutrient between ten and nineteen percent, it is considered to be a good source of that nutrient. If a food has a percent daily value of more than twenty percent, it is considered to be high in that nutrient.

Although this nutrition label does not have an ingredients list, almost all nutrition labels do. When you look at a nutrition label with a list of ingredients at the bottom, the first three ingredients in the list are the most common ingredients in that food.

**Activity:**

Nutrition labels allow us to compare similar foods and drinks. Comparing the nutritional value of different foods and drinks makes it easier for us to pick which ones are better for us. We have talked about how sugar is at the top of the Food Pyramid, which means that we should limit how much sugar we eat and drink. Working in groups of three, we are going to compare the sugar in different drinks. I am going to give each group three different drinks. I want you to look at the nutrition labels on the drinks and find how much sugar is in them. Then, I want you to write down which drink has the most sugar and how much sugar is in it. I also want you to write down which drink has the least sugar and how much sugar is in it.

*Distribute drinks and blank paper for students to write on. Wait for students to complete the task.*

**Who would like to share what they found with the class? Which one of your drinks had the most sugar and which one had the least sugar?**

*Allow a few groups to explain the sugar content of their drinks.*

Each group found that water has the least amount of sugar. When you are choosing what to drink, water is the best option. It will hydrate you without filling you up with added sugar.