# What the Label Doesn't Tell You 

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It has been nearly 20 years since the government overhauled food labels. Since then, companies have come up with new schemes to trick consumers. And some older problems were never fixed the first time around.

Here's how the food label can trip you up... and what a new, improved label might look like.
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# Label Makeover 

## Current Label


*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

|  | Calories: | 2,000 | 2,500 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Total Fat | Less than | 65 g | 80 g |
| Sat Fat | Less than | 20 g | 25 g |
| Cholesterol | Less than | 300 mg | 300 mg |
| Sodium | Less than | $2,400 \mathrm{mg}$ | $2,400 \mathrm{mg}$ |
| Total Carbohydrate | 300 g | 375 g |  |
| Dietary Fiber |  | 25 g | 30 g |

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 Carbohydrate 4
Protein 4
INGREDIENTS: ENRICHED BLEACHED FLOUR (WHEAT FLOUR, NIACIN, IRON, 'HHIAMIN MONONITRATE, RIBO FLAVIN, FOLIC ACID), SUGAR, SKIM MILK, VEGETABLE OIL (PALM, SOYBEAN AND/OR COTTONSEED OILS), WATER, COCOA PROCESSED WITH ALKALI, EGGS, CORN SYRUP, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, CHERRIES, WHITE GRAPE JUICE CONCENTRATE. CONTAINS 2\% OR LESS OF EACH OF THE FOLLOWING: WHOLE WHEAT \& OUR, CARAMEL COLOR, POLYDEXTROSE, LEAVENING (BAKING SODA, SODIUM ALUMINUM PHOSPHATE, MONOCALCIUM PHOSPHATE), SALT, CORN STARCH, MONO- AND DIGLYCERIDES, NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS, POLYGLYCEROL ESTERS OF FATTY ACIDS, SODIUM ALGINATE, NATURAL COCOA EXTRACT, PROPYLENE GLYCOL MONO- AND DIESTERS OF FATS AND FATTY ACIDS, MALTODEXTRIM, GELLAN GUM, LACTYLIC ESTERS OF FATTY ACIDS, SOY LECITHIN, POLYSORBATE 60, SOY FLOUR, COFFEE CONTAINS MILK, WHEAT, EGGS AND SOY.

Calories and serving size should be in larger type.

Unnecessary information.

Calling it "\% Daily Amount" would be more understandable.

The Daily Amount for sodium should be $1,500 \mathrm{mg}$. The current $2,400 \mathrm{mg}$ is too high.

With no Daily Value for trans fat, added sugars, or protein, consumers don't know how much to shoot for each day.
"Dietary fiber" should be called "Fiber" and should include only intact fiber from whole grains, beans, vegetables, fruit, and other foods. Polydextrose, maltodextrin, and similar carbohydrates should not count as fiber.

This information isn't useful for most consumers.

The label should list only added sugars (from high-fructose corn syrup, table sugar, etc.), not the naturally occurring sugars in milk and fruit.

Many people don't realize that this is ordinary refined white flour.

All-capital letters are hard to read.

If the food contains grains, the label should say what percent of the grains are whole grains.

The "\% Daily Amount" lets consumers know how much of a day's worth of trans fat, added sugar, protein, etc., each serving contains.

Red color and
"High" warn consumers when a serving has at least 20 percent of the Daily Amount for saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium, or added sugars.

Caffeine content is disclosed.

Consumers can see that when all the cake's sugars are combined, they become the first ingredient.

Label should show percentages by weight of key ingredients, especially those that are good or bad for your health.

## Bullets separate

 ingredients.Minor ingredients and allergens are listed separately.

## Better Label

## Grains: $2 \%$ whole <br> Nutrition Facts

Serving Size $\quad 1 / 14$ Cake ( 107 g )
Calories in 1 serving 350
14 Servings per Box

| $\frac{\text { Amount per serving }}{\text { Total Fat }}$ | \% Daily Amount* |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 14 g | High |  |
| Saturated Fat | 5 g | High | 25\% |
| Trans Fat | 0 g |  | \% |
| Cholesterol | 30 mg |  | 10\% |
| Sodium | 290 mg |  | 19\% |
| Total Carbohydrat | 53 g |  | 18\% |
| Fiber | 3 g |  | 12\% |
| Added Sugars | 30 g | High |  |
| Protein | 4 g |  | 8\% |
| Vitaminh 0\% | - Vita | min C | 0\% |
| Calcium 4\% | - Iron |  | 15\% |

${ }^{*} \%$ Daily Amount is based on 2,000 calories a day. $20 \%$ or more of the DA is HIGH. $5 \%$ or less is LOW.

50 mg caffeine per serving

## lingredient Facts

Major Ingredients: Sugars (sugar, corn syrup, high-fructose com syrup, white grape juice concentrate) ( $28 \%$ ) •Skim milk • Refined bleached tlour (wheatt flour, niacin, iron, thiamin mononitryte, riboflavin, folic acid) - Vegetable oil/palm, soybean, and/or cottonseed oils - Water $\bullet$ Cocoa processed with alkali (5\% • Eggs • Cherries (3\%)
Contains 2\% or less of: Whole wheat flour - Caramel color • Polydextrose •Leavening (baking soda, sodium aluminum phosphate, monocalcium phosphate) • Salt • Corn starch • Mono- and diglycerides • Natural and artificial flavors - Polyglycerol esters of fatty acids - Sodium alginate • Natural cocoa extract • Propylene glycol • Mono- and diesters of fats and fatty acids • Maltodextrin • Gellan gum • Lactylic esters of fatty acids • Soy lecithin • Polysorbate 60 - Soy flour •Coffee

Allergy Information: Contains MILK • WHEAT • EGGS • SOY

