



Exploring the Food Groups

Fifth-grade nutrition education newsletter

Lesson **3**

Decisions, decisions, decisions

Read food labels to be a cool consumer. Check the Nutrition Facts to make healthy food choices. Compare calories, fat, sodium, sugar and nutrients such as vitamins or minerals.

Looking at calories, fat, sodium and sugar

When you look at the Nutrition Facts you can find out how many calories, fat, sodium and sugar is in a slice of apple pie as compared to a whole apple.

	
Slice of apple pie	Whole apple
Calories 300	Calories 80
Sodium 360 mg	Sodium 0 mg
Sugars 37 g	Sugars 17 g
Fiber 0 g	Fiber 4 g

You can see that the whole apple has about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the calories as the apple pie. With regard to sodium (or salt), the whole apple has none, and the apple pie has about the same amount of salt as a slice of ham! There are 9 teaspoons of sugar in the apple pie versus 4 teaspoons in sugar (the sugar in the whole

apple occurs naturally and isn't added sugar). When you look at the percent daily value for fiber on the Nutrition Facts you can see (above) that apple pie doesn't have any fiber while the apple is a good source.

The bottom line?

After a quick look at the Nutrition Facts, you can see that for many reasons — low calories, no sodium, low sugar and higher fiber — the whole apple is the better choice. The apple also contains other important nutrients like vitamin C and potassium that aren't found in the pie.

How can you make reading labels the easy choice?

- Get familiar with the Nutrition Facts of packaged foods you buy often. When you have decided on the best choices, it's not necessary to read the labels each time you shop.
- Do you have access to the internet? You may find Nutrition Facts online when you search for specific foods. Many companies have this information online for consumers. You can search before going to the grocery store or even before going out to eat.
- Choose foods with less packaging. Packaged food is more processed and more likely to have more calories, saturated fat, added sugars and sodium while providing fewer nutrients. Less packaged food means less label reading!



Packaged foods are more processed and are likely to have more calories, fat, and sodium with fewer nutrients.



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For more information, call MU Extension's Show Me Nutrition Line at 1-888-515-0016.

Need help stretching your food dollars? Contact your local resource center or go online to mydss.mo.gov/food-assistance