

The Food and Drug Administration recently announced the finalized updates to the Nutritional Facts Panel found on packaged foods. The panel helps consumers make informed food choices, and with the exception of the addition of trans-fats in 2006, the panel has remained essentially unchanged for the last 20 years. Two of the most noteworthy updates are that serving sizes will be adjusted to reflect how much people actually eat, and for the first time, labels will list added sugars. With an increasing number of Americans battling obesity, diabetes and heart disease, these changes will make it easier for consumers to make healthier informed food choices based on updated nutrition science. Roughly 800,000 products will be affected. Consumers may not see the new label immediately; manufacturers have until July 2018 to comply with the new rules and small businesses with fewer than \$10 million in annual sales have an additional year to comply. Here are some of the highlights:

- The type size for “Calories,” “servings per container,” and the “Serving size” declaration, will be increased and bolded in order to highlight this information.
- Manufacturers must declare the actual amount, in addition to percent Daily Value of vitamin D, calcium, iron and potassium.
- Added sugars, in grams and as percent Daily Value, will be included on the label.
- The list of nutrients that are required or permitted to be declared is being updated. Vitamin D and potassium will be required on the label. Calcium and iron will continue to be required. Vitamins A and C will no longer be required but can be included on a voluntary basis.
- While continuing to require “Total Fat,” “Saturated Fat,” and “Trans Fat” on the label, “Calories from Fat” is being removed because research shows the type of fat is more important than the amount.
- Daily values for nutrients like sodium, dietary fiber and vitamin D are being updated based on newer scientific evidence. The %DV helps consumers understand the nutrition information in the context of a total daily diet.
- By law, serving sizes must be based on amounts of foods and beverages that people are actually eating, not what they should be eating. How much people eat and drink has changed since the previous serving size requirements were published in 1993. For example, the reference amount used to set a serving of ice cream was previously $\frac{1}{2}$ cup but is changing to $\frac{2}{3}$ cup. The reference amount used to set a serving of soda is changing from 8 ounces to 12 ounces.