Reading food labels

It is recommended to eat a variety of foods from the 5 food groups each day. Some of these foods come in packages. To help you select the healthiest foods, check the ingredients list and nutrition information panel.

- The ingredients list shows what the product contains in order of weight, from largest to smallest.
- The nutrition information panel shows you what nutrients the product contains.
- It will have two columns: quantity per serving size and quantity per 100g. Use the per 100g column to compare products.

Ingredients

Wheat Flour, Vegetable Oil (Antioxidant E307b From **Soy**), Herb Extract, Sugar, Salt, Malt Extract (From **Barley**), Baking Powder, Yeast, Food Acid (Citric Acid), Emulsifier (**Soy** Lecithin).
CONTAINS: WHEAT, GLUTEN, SOY
MAY CONTAIN: MILK, PEANUTS, EGG, TREE NUTS

NUTRITION INFORMATION PANEL

Nutrition Information: Corn cakes (multigrain) Serving size: 18g		
	Per serving	Per 100g
Energy	292kj	1620kj
Protein	1.9g	10.6g
Fat, Total	0.6g	3.4g
Saturated	0.1g	0.5g
Carbohydrate	13g	72.1g
Sugars	0.1g	0.7g
Sodium	47mg	47mg
Dietary fibre	1.2g	259g

Nutrition Information: Wheat biscuits Serving size: 25g		
	Per serving	Per 100g
Energy	488kj	1950kj
Protein	1.9g	7.6g
Fat, Total	4.6g	18.3g
Saturated	1.0g	4.1g
Carbohydrate	16.5g	66.0g
Sugars	1.5g	6.0g
Sodium	123mg	490mg
Dietary fibre	0.8g	3.4g

The label reading card can help you make the healthiest food choice. This card outlines the optimal levels of fat, sugar, sodium (salt) and fibre to look for in packaged products.

Using the label reading card, which product do you believe is the healthiest choice?
(answer is at the end).

LABEL READING CARD

Compare numbers in the per 100g column	
Total fat	Less than 10g
Saturated fat	Less than 3g
Sugar	Less than 15g
Sodium (salt)	Less than 400mg
Fibre * *Breads, cereals & grain foods	3g or more per serve



FOOD SAFETY TIPS

- Put opened or cooked foods in the fridge. Eat within 2 days.
- Only reheat food once.
- Check the dates of foods. Throw out any food past its use-by date.

WHEN SELECTING PACKAGED FOODS FOR BABIES

- Choose products low in salt, less than 120mg of sodium per day is best.
- Pre-packaged baby foods are often low in iron and texture. Select products with the highest amount of added iron e.g. meat, beans and legumes.
- If using food from pouches, place into a bowl and give to baby using a spoon.
- Limit these low textured foods to encourage chewing and speech development.

(Answer: the corn thins are the healthiest choice as they contain less saturated fat, sugar and salt (sodium) and the highest amount of fibre)

BABIES AND TODDLERS DON'T NEED ANY SALT OR SUGARS ADDED TO THEIR FOOD.

Look out for hidden salts and sugars in:

a) sauces such as soy, tomato/BBQ, gravy, stock, or seasonings

b) sugars can be labelled as sucrose, dextrose, maltose, glucose, honey, golden syrup, molasses, treacle or maple syrup.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

- www.karitane.com.au
- www.healthybeginnings.net.au

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