CHANGES TO NUTRITION LABELS:

It’s a matter of new facts.

A lot has changed in Americans’ diets since the Nutrition Facts labels first appeared on food packages in 1993. Rates of obesity, heart disease, and cancer are high and portion sizes have become more and more generous. Nutrition science has made new discoveries and connections between food and health. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has released a new Nutrition Facts label design that is easier to read and is helpful for consumers to make healthier, informed food choices.

OLD LABEL

NEW LABEL

Larger and bolder type on serving sizes and amount of calories make it easy to read.

Now includes the amount of added sugars and a % daily value. Added sugars should be limited to 10% of daily calories.

Actual amounts of required nutrients now included.

Vitamin D and potassium added to required nutrients listed.

New footnote better explains the Percent Daily Value.
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SERVING SIZES GET A REALITY CHECK

What’s considered a single serving has changed in the decades since the original nutrition label was created. Now serving sizes will be more realistic to reflect how much people typically eat.

OLD SERVING SIZE

4 SERVINGS

1 PINT

200 CALORIES

NEW SERVING SIZE

3 SERVINGS

1 PINT

270 CALORIES

PACKAGING AFFECTS SERVINGS

Package sizes affect how much people eat and drink. Now, for example, both 12 and 20 ounce bottles will be considered 1 serving, since people typically drink both sizes in one sitting.

1 BOTTLE = 1 SERVING
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1. The Nutrition Facts label was first introduced in 1993. Aside from adding Trans Fat to the label in 2005, the information and design remained relatively unchanged. What events or trends have happened in last 20 years that may have influenced the need for a label redesign?

2. A listing of the amount of Added Sugars and a % Daily Value has been added to the new Nutrition Facts label. How are “added sugars” different from the “sugar” listing on the old label? Why do you think there is increased focus placed on sugar when it comes to healthy eating?

3. Take a look at the new Nutrition Facts label. Do you think the design changes have made the label easier to read? Why or why not? What recommendations would you make to improve the new label?
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4. The required nutrient listings on the Nutrition Facts labels have changed. Why have vitamin D and potassium been added to the label? What do these nutrients do? Why are vitamins A and C no longer required on the label? ________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
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5. Who should decide what information is provided on food labels? Consumers? Food manufacturers? The government? Why?
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Dig Deeper: Proposed Changes to the Nutrition Facts Label Inquiry Questions

1. The Nutrition Facts label was first introduced in 1993. Aside from adding Trans Fat to the label in 2005, the information and design remained relatively unchanged. What events or trends have happened in last 20 years that may have influenced the need for a label redesign?

   Responses could include any of the following examples:
   - Advances in research improve our understanding regarding the role nutrients play in our health and wellbeing.
   - Increases in packaging sizes (particularly those that appear to be a single serving) and the portion sizes people serve themselves.
   - High rates of chronic diseases like obesity, heart disease, hypertension, and stroke.

2. A listing of the amount of Added Sugars and a % Daily Value has been added to the new Nutrition Facts label. How are “added sugars” different from the “sugar” listing on the old label? Why do you think there is increased focus placed on sugar when it comes to healthy eating?

   - Added sugars are sugars and syrups that are added to foods or beverages when they are processed or prepared. This does not include natural sugars found in milk and fruits. The old “sugar” listing included both natural and added sugars.
   - More focus is placed on sugar because eating too much increases the risk of heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and certain cancers. Scientific data shows that it is difficult to meet nutrient needs while staying within calorie limits if you consume more than the 10 percent of total calories from added sugars.

3. Take a look at the new Nutrition Facts label. Do you think the design changes have made the label easier to read? Why or why not? What recommendations would you make to improve the new label?

   Answers will vary based on student opinion.
4. The required nutrient listings on the Nutrition Facts labels have changed. Why have vitamin D and potassium been added to the label? What do these nutrients do? Why are vitamins A and C no longer required on the label? *Vitamin D and potassium are nutrients that Americans don't always get enough of. When the body doesn't get enough, there is an increased risk of chronic disease.* *Vitamin D is important for bone health and potassium helps lower blood pressure.* *Vitamin A and C are no longer required because deficiencies in the general population are rare.* *Food manufacturers can list these vitamins voluntarily, but are no longer required to do so.*

5. Who should decide what information is provided on food labels? Consumers? Food manufacturers? The government? Why?

*Answers will vary based on student opinion.*