



Educator Guide: Nutrition Lesson

Recommended for Grades:

7th grade

Time:

8 minutes

National Health Education Standards:

This activity aligns with the following National Health Education Standards:

- Standard 1: Use functional health information to support health and well-being of self and others.
- Standard 2: Analyze influences that affect health and well-being of self and others.
- Standard 3: Access valid and reliable resources to support health and well-being of self and others.

For more information about the National Health Education Standards, visit the SHAPE America website: shapeamerica.org.

Learning Objectives:

After completing this lesson students will be able to:

1. Examine Nutrition Facts labels of two foods in the same food group, and determine which food is the healthier choice.
2. List three questions they can ask themselves to help determine if a source of information is valid.
3. Identify the healthier snack when shown the Nutrition Facts labels for each food item.

Lesson Description:

In this lesson, students will learn how to read Nutrition Facts labels, and what a healthy meal and snack look like. They will also learn how to determine what makes something a valid source of nutrition information.



Pre and Post-Test Questions:

Use the following questions with your students in any way that you see fit (on paper, using a survey tool, etc.) You may choose to combine questions from various lessons and activities that your students participate in. Correct (or ideal) answer choices are bolded.

1. Which of the following is a valid source of health information?
 - a. TV commercials
 - b. Friends
 - c. Nutrition Facts labels**

2. I would choose fruits more often if given the option.
 - a. Strongly agree**
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree

3. I would choose vegetables more often if given the option.
 - a. Strongly agree**
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree

4. Drinking zero sweetened beverages is a healthy behavior I could commit to each day.
 - a. Strongly agree**
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree

Vocabulary:

Use the following list of vocabulary as a reference for yourself or your students as you complete the Nutrition lesson. You may choose to use this list in any way that fits your needs.

- Calorie – a unit of energy
- Fiber – a nutrient that helps food move through the digestive system and helps you feel full
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA) – an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that oversees and regulates the nation's food supply
- Heart disease – a variety of conditions affecting the heart and blood vessels
- Nutrients – substances in food that give the body energy and help it grow and develop properly
- Nutrition Facts label – a label required on most packaged foods that provides detailed information about a food's nutrient content, such as the amount of fat, sugar, sodium and fiber it contains
- Saturated fat – fat that usually comes from animal products (meat and dairy products) that are typically solid at room temperature
- Serving size – the recommended portion of a food to be eaten
- Trans fat – a type of fat found in foods such as fried foods, doughnuts and baked goods (cakes, pie crusts, cookies and biscuits), frozen pizza, crackers, stick margarines and other spreads
- Vitamins – substances found in foods we eat that the body needs to work properly

Nutrition Lesson Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Complete this worksheet as you move through the Nutrition Lesson.

1. What are three questions you can ask to help determine if a source of information is valid?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. List six things you can learn from a Nutrition Facts label.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

f. _____



3. Each meal should contain one serving of the following food groups:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4. What are two ways to make healthy snacking easier?

a. _____

b. _____



Nutrition Lesson Worksheet Answer Key

1. What are three questions you can ask to help determine if a source of information is valid?
 - a. Who wrote it?
 - b. Is the information up to date?
 - c. What is the intent?

2. List six things about a food that you can learn from a Nutrition Facts label.
 - a. Serving size
 - b. Calories
 - c. Saturated fat
 - d. Trans fat
 - e. Dietary fiber
 - f. Sugar

3. Each meal should contain one serving of the following food groups:
 - a. 1 fruit or vegetable
 - b. 1 whole grain
 - c. 1 dairy or protein

4. What are two ways to make healthy snacking easier? Answers could include any of the following:
 - Think about what food groups are missing from your meals.
 - Think outside the box.
 - Plan ahead.
 - Read Nutrition Facts labels.

Handouts

Included on the following pages are additional resources that you and your students' families may find useful.



Nutrition and Physical Activity Resources for Parents, Caregivers and Educators

- American Academy of Pediatrics, [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)
- American Heart Association, [heart.org](https://www.heart.org)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)
- Children's Wisconsin, [childrenswi.org](https://www.childrenswi.org)
- KidsHealth, [kidshealth.org](https://www.kidshealth.org)
- Mental Health America, [mhanational.org](https://www.mhanational.org)
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), [nimh.nih.gov](https://www.nimh.nih.gov)
- Society of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology, [effectivechildtherapy.org](https://www.effectivechildtherapy.org)
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Student Services/Prevention and Wellness, dpi.wi.gov/sspw



Transcript

Slide 1 (Video)

Taylor: We all know that food is fuel our body needs to get through the day. And think of all the different things you do each day! School, homework, sports, friends... The list goes on and on. Your body needs energy to do all those things, and that energy comes from the food you eat.

Camara: Different foods have different nutrients in them, and some foods are going to fuel your body better than others. Nutrients are substances in food that give your body energy and help it to grow and develop properly.

Taylor: But, it's not always easy to figure out if a food is healthy or not so it's important to know how to find valid, or accurate, sources of information. Information on the nutritional value of food can be found on the internet, on TV, in the grocery store, in the doctor's office, from friends, and many other places. With all of the information out there today it can be really hard to figure out if you can trust what you find.

Camara: One question to ask yourself is who wrote this information. If it's a website, who runs the website, and who is paying for the site? Is this information reviewed by experts?

Taylor: Next, you want the information to be current, or up to date. Ideally, research should be done from the last few years. If the article you're reading references research from 10 or more years ago, it's probably not up to date.

Camara: And, it's also important to look at what the intent of the information is. For example, let's say you're looking for information on sources of vitamin C. The website that you go to keeps referencing a specific brand of vitamin C supplement. That tells me the website is more concerned with trying to sell a specific product, than providing accurate information on vitamin C.

Taylor: Sounds like we need to take a look at a couple valid sources of health information. Before we do that, please open the worksheet and either save it or print it. Complete this worksheet as you move through the lesson.

Slide 2

Let's take a closer look at what we can learn by reading a nutrition facts label. These labels give you lots of information that can help you make healthy choices, like ingredients, serving size, calories, as well as the amount of sugar, fat, and other nutrients found in the food. There are guidelines from the FDA, or the Food and Drug Administration, stating what companies need to include on their Nutrition Facts labels.

Slide 3

Click on each highlighted area to learn more.

Serving size: All the information on the rest of the label is based on serving size so always make sure to look at it. Sometimes the serving size will be less than you may think. Even packages that you think are just one serving may actually contain two or more servings!

Calories: A calorie is a way to measure how much energy a food provides the body.

Saturated fat: Our bodies do need some fat every day, but the type of fat matters. Saturated fats usually come from animal products like cheese, meat, and ice cream. We should try to limit the amount of saturated fat we eat because too much can increase a person's risk for developing heart disease.

Trans fat: Trans fat is a type of fat that our body does not need. It can increase a person's risk for developing heart disease. Trans fats include vegetable oils that are solid at room temperature. An example would be shortening which is used in some baked goods like cookies, cakes, donuts and crackers. We should try to avoid trans fats as much as possible.

Dietary fiber: Fiber helps keep the digestive system healthy. It helps you feel full so you're not hungry again a half hour after lunch. Foods that are high in fiber include fruits and vegetables, and whole grains like whole wheat bread, brown rice, and oatmeal. Aim for foods that have at least 3 grams of fiber when choosing foods like cereal, pasta and bread.

Sugar: Some sugar is found in most foods. But when a food contains a lot of sugar, like soda, candy, cookies, and other processed snack foods, the calories can add up quickly. Often there is a lot more sugar in foods than you might think!

Added sugars: Added sugars are sugars that are added to a food during the processing or packaging of the product. If we're eating too many added sugars, odds are we're not eating enough of the healthier foods that will give us the nutrients that our body needs.



Slide 4

Each of your meals should ideally contain at least one fruit or vegetable, one whole grain and one serving of dairy or protein.

And remember, you can combine food groups. For example, a turkey wrap can include a vegetable, protein and whole grain all in one! Add a fruit on the side and you've got a great lunch to fuel you through the afternoon.

Slide 5

Even when you're taking the time to eat three meals each day, you're probably getting hungry in between meals too. Healthy snacks can keep your energy level up and your mind alert throughout the day. Most kids are pretty hungry when they get home from school. But, that doesn't mean you should eat a bunch of French fries, or a candy bar and soda after school! To keep energy levels up and avoid unwanted weight gain, aim for snacks with fiber and protein. This will help prevent you from feeling too hungry between meals.

Slide 6

Here are some ways to make healthy snacking an easy part of your day.

Think about what food groups are missing from your regular meals. Try to have a snack from that missing food group. Ideally, snacks will contain 1-2 food groups.

Think outside the box. Snacks do not have to be packaged in order to be easy. What's easier than eating an apple or a banana while you're on the run?!

Plan ahead. If you know you're going to be running from school to cross-country practice, make sure to have snacks ready to go!

And read Nutrition Facts labels. If you're grabbing a packaged snack, aim for foods with at least three grams of fiber in each serving.



Slide 7

Let's take a look at some Nutrition Facts labels and see if you can determine which food would be the healthier choice. Here are two Nutrition Facts labels for granola bars. Click on the label you think is the healthier choice.

(First label): Correct! This granola bar is the healthier choice because it has three grams of fiber in it, versus 1 gram in the other brand. It also contains less sugar.

(Second label): That's incorrect. This granola bar has more sugar in it than the other brand, and it has less fiber. Remember to aim for at least three grams of sugar when choosing a snack like a granola bar.

Slide 8

Let's try one more. Here are two Nutrition Facts labels for two different yogurts. Click on which label you think is the healthier choice.

(Top label): Sorry, but this is not the healthier choice. This yogurt has a lot more sugar than the other brand.

(Bottom label): You're right! This is definitely the healthier choice. This yogurt has a lot less sugar than the other brand.

Slide 9 (Video)

Taylor: Lots of things can affect what you choose to pack in your lunches and what you choose for snacks. Most likely, at your age, your choices are limited to what you have at home, and you're probably not the one doing the grocery shopping. Go home and take a look in the refrigerator and pantry. Are there healthy choices? If not, let the adults at home know what you're learning at school, and see if you can go grocery shopping with them.

Camara: Sometimes what everyone around you is eating affects what you choose to eat. For example, if everyone around you at lunch or basketball practice is eating junk food, you may be more likely to grab unhealthy foods. Instead, you can choose to set an example and eat foods that are going to fuel your body.

Taylor: Many holidays and other special occasions seem to revolve around food. Birthdays, Halloween, the 4th of July, Thanksgiving...the list goes on and on. We certainly don't need to avoid celebrations all together! Look for the healthiest options at these celebrations and save room for a small treat.



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