

Reading Food Labels: Fat Content

In an effort to provide consumers with useful information about the nutritional content of various food products, manufacturers are responsible for labeling their products with Nutrition Facts. Among other key pieces of data, there are typically THREE pieces of information about **Fat Content**:

- the total calories from fat
- the number grams of fat
- the percentage of RDA (Recommended Dietary Allowance).

But what does this mean? Following are some tips for interpreting the Nutrition Facts about Fat Content. We'll be using the labels from two products as examples: a box of **Keebler Town House Crackers**, and a can of **Bumble Bee Solid White Albacore Tuna**. (*)

Understand the Serving Size

It's very important to keep in mind that Nutrition Facts are usually shown PER SERVING. In our example, the label on the cracker box indicates serving size as 5 crackers, and on the tuna the serving size is about 2 ounces. So, all Nutrition Facts on the label reflect the amounts contained in ONE SERVING. A "serving" as defined on the label may in fact be a smaller amount than you usually consume, so be careful to consider this when calculating your own fat intake.

(*) Note: This article is neither promoting nor criticizing these products, but merely using them as illustrative examples. This article is being offered only as general nutritional information, and not dietary advice.

RDA

Recommended Dietary Allowance amounts are based on "average" daily nutritional requirements. Your personal caloric requirements may be different, depending on a wide range of variables. Therefore, you should consider these as general guidelines rather than hard-and-fast rules. Regarding fat intake, RDA guidelines suggest that Fat should constitute about 20-30% of total calories consumed daily.

Total Calories, Calories from Fat, Fat % of RDA: What's it all mean?

	Crackers	Tuna
Calories	80	70
Calories from Fat	40	10
Fat Grams	4.5	1
% RDA	7%	2%

Our examples: All amounts are per serving

OK, what does this tell us? Not a big difference in calories, but let's look at the fat content. One serving of crackers would provide 7% (or about 1/14th) of the total amount of recommended fat per day. One serving of tuna provides 2% (1/50th) of the RDA of fat.

More significantly, we see that the calories in the crackers are 50% fat, while those in the tuna are about 14% fat. Keeping in mind that the RDA calls for about 20-30% of calories from fat, what does that tell you about the crackers vs the tuna?

For more FREE FITNESS ARTICLES and E-BOOKS, visit us at www.peakperformancenj.com

Peak Performance is a family owned and operated Health Club and Personal Training Studio located in Berkeley Heights, NJ. Co-owners Pete & Joe Bellisano are certified fitness professionals who are dedicated to improving their clients' quality of life through fitness.