

Food Label Identifies Cholesterol Intake

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Whether you're watching your blood cholesterol for general health reasons or because your doctor has advised you to, the new Nutrition Facts panel due on most packaged foods by May 8 can help you.

"To control your blood cholesterol, you need to control the amount of saturated fat as well as the amount of cholesterol you consume," says Dr. J. Lynne Brown, associate professor of food science in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "The Nutrition Facts panel lists the amount of saturated fat and the amount of cholesterol in a serving.

"This listing allows you to compare the amounts of these nutrients in different foods. Suppose you are comparing two different kinds of cookies. A serving of one type lists 5 grams of saturated fat and a serving of another type list 2 grams of saturated fat. To help control your blood cholesterol, you would be wise to choose the cookie with only 2 grams."

The Nutrition Facts label also lists another handy tool for blood cholesterol watchers. It's called the Percent Daily Value. "This shows the amount of a nutrient that a serving of that food contributes to the amount recommended for a healthful diet," says Brown.

"Think of it as a point system. You are allowed 100 points, or 100 percent in a day, of cholesterol. The foods you eat in a day should provide not much more than a 100 Percent Daily Value of cholesterol.

Compare the daily values of different foods to find one suitable for you. "Suppose you're looking at two types of frozen cheesecake," says Brown. "A serving of one type of cheesecake provides 50 percent of the daily value for cholesterol; a serving of the other provides 30 percent. If you choose the one with 30 percent, you still have 70 points, or 70 percent, of the amount of cholesterol recommended that can come from other foods that day.

"However, if you choose the one with 50 percent, then you

have to be careful to choose other low-cholesterol foods on the day you eat the cheesecake since you have only 50 percent left."

The new food label regulations provide two other tools that can help those concerned about blood cholesterol — health claims and nutrient content claims. "The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) allows foods to carry health claims about nutrients and heart disease," says Brown. "Most of the time, these claims will appear on the front of the package.

"A label might state, 'While many factors affect heart disease, diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease.' If the manufacturer cannot fit the claim on the front of the package, you may see a statement like this: 'See side panel for information about the relationship of saturated fat, cholesterol and heart disease.'"

A health-claim statement is useful for spotting foods that are low in saturated fat and cholesterol. "Any food carrying a health claim can have no more than 4 grams of saturated fat and 60 milligrams of cholesterol per serving," says Brown.

"In addition, the food can have no more than 13 grams of total fat and 480 milligrams of sodium per serving. Those carrying claims about saturated fat, cholesterol, and heart disease must have even smaller amounts of fat, saturated fat and cholesterol."

People watching their blood cholesterol can look for several

other nutrient content claims. "Saturated fat free" means the food has less than 0.5 grams of saturated fat. "Low in saturated fat" means the food has no more than 1 gram of saturated fat.

"Cholesterol free" means less than 2 milligrams of cholesterol and no more than 2 grams of saturated fat. "Low cholesterol" means

less than 20 milligrams of cholesterol and no more than 2 grams of saturated fat.

"Study these claims and then take a close look at the Nutrition Facts panel," says Brown. "A food carrying these labels still can be high in total fat and calories, because there are other types of fat besides saturated fat. Always check the numbers."

Octoraro Sponsors Photography Contest

KIRKWOOD (Lancaster Co.) — The Octoraro Watershed Association is sponsoring its second annual photographic contest and exhibit on April 20 at Black Rock Retreat, Kirkwood.

Each photographer may enter four photographs in the contest at the entry fee of \$3 per photo. Photos submitted must range in size from 8x10- to 16x20-inches and must be matted but not framed. All pictures must be taken within the Octoraro Watershed. Maps of the watershed are available.

Categories of this year's contest include color photographs of wild-life (flora and fauna), landscapes, farms and farming, and others. Black and white photographs may also be submitted. A new category for color or black and white has been added. Young Photographers is for those 18 years old and younger.

Cash prizes will be awarded to the winners in each category as well as Best of Show prize. There will be a people's choice award chosen by the association mem-

bers who view the exhibit at Black Rock Retreat on April 20.

Following the opening show, a traveling exhibit of the photographs will be displayed in 10 different locations throughout the watershed area from May to October.

For more information regarding contest rules and entry applications, call Annette Menhennett (215) 593-5726; Trudi Green (215) 593-2273; or Patrick Fasano (717) 529-2607.

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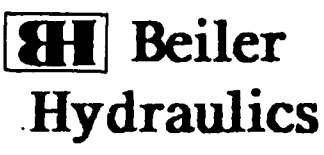


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