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#### METABOLIC NUTRITION PROGRAM

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# How to Read a Nutrition Label



# **Nutrition Label Ingredient List for a Low Protein Diet:**

Ingredients to Watch Out For	Acceptable Ingredients
<ul> <li>Milk (dry milk, skim milk, whole milk, condensed milk, evaporated milk)</li> <li>Non-fat dry milk solids</li> <li>Imitation milk</li> <li>Whey (derived from milk)</li> <li>Lactalbumin (protein in milk)</li> <li>Casein, caseinate, sodium caseinate, calcium caseinate, calcium caseinate, potassium caseinate.</li> <li>Eggs (whites or yolk)</li> <li>Albumin (egg white)</li> <li>Hydrolyzed vegetable protein (HVP)</li> <li>Flours: soy, wheat, rice, corn, potato, artichoke, tapioca</li> <li>Potato starch</li> <li>Gluten (protein from wheat flour)</li> <li>Gelatin</li> <li>Bouillon, broth</li> <li>Butter</li> <li>Wheat germ</li> <li>Seeds</li> <li>If PKU: Aspartame or NutraSweet (artificial sweetener)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Antioxidants: BHA, BHT, sodium lactate, propyl gallate.</li> <li>Stabilizing &amp; thickening agents such as methylcellulose, alginates, carrageenan, gums,pectin</li> <li>Preservatives such as calcium or sodium propionate, EDTA, potassium sorbate, sodium benzoate</li> <li>Nutritional supplements such as vitamins and minerals</li> <li>Sugar and Sweeteners such as corn syrup, dextrose, lactose, glucose, invert sugar, sucrose, sorbitol, saccharin, mannitol, xylitol</li> <li>Emulsifiers such as polysorbate 60, sodium citrate, mono- and diglycerides</li> <li>Citric acid, fumaric acids, sorbic acid, sodium citrate, acetic or malic or lactic acids</li> <li>Artificial colors and flavors</li> <li>Modified food starch, tapioca starch, cornstarch</li> <li>Cocoa butter, Lactylic stearate</li> <li>Coconut, soybean, peanut oils</li> <li>Shortening, Propylene glycol</li> <li>Lecithin, soybean lecithin (antioxidant)</li> <li>Phenylacetic acid (artificial flavor)</li> </ul>

### **More About Reading Nutrition Labels**

Ingredients are listed on food labels in descending order by amount in recipe. In other words, the ingredient with the largest amount **by weight** will be listed first, the next most plentiful will be listed second, and so on. Additives and ingredients will be listed by name. It is imperative to know what ingredients and additives contain protein, as it may not be clear by just reading them.

#### How Much is a Serving?

Serving size is determined by individual food manufacturers, and is listed at the top of the grid on a nutritional label. The nutrition facts on the rest of the label will be based on that serving size. A serving can be listed as pieces, cups, ounces, or tablespoons.

It is critical to pay attention to serving sizes when following a protein-restricted diet. If the serving size on the label is extremely small, you can easily be eating more than one serving in a sitting. Even if the amount of protein per serving is low, it can quickly add up if multiple servings are consumed. Foods with small amounts of protein (1-2 grams per serving) might be able to be used if the serving size is substantial enough. *Run any food in question by your dietitian before giving it to your child.* 

The first item to note on the Nutrition Facts label is grams of protein per serving. This will be your main guide as to whether you can eat a food. Be suspicious, however, of foods that contain less than 1 gram of protein per serving. If a serving contains between 0 and 0.5 grams per serving, the manufacturer is not required to note this in the nutrition facts. For example, Whitehall cheese (slices) have .36 gram of protein per serving, but the label notes zero grams per serving.

Technically, there is no regulation for the manufacturers to provide an accurate amount of protein in grams. If a label reads <1 gm, it could be 0.9gm or 0.1gm. If a label reads 1gm, it could have up to 1.5 or even 1.9gm of protein. You must, therefore, still check the list of ingredients for "Ingredients to watch for" or limited foods or additives to be certain of protein content.

As a rule of thumb, when reading a label, if any of the first three ingredients is listed on the "ingredients to watch out for" do *round up* the grams of protein.