

# Reading nutritional panels



Nutrition Information Panels (NIPs) provide useful information about the foods you eat. Here's a basic NIP and a quick guide for understanding how they work, so you can work out the energy content and important nutrients.

## Can you guess this food?

The 'culture' in the ingredients list gives us a hint – yoghurt!

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION		
Serving per packages: 3		
Serving size: 150g		
	Per serving	Per 100 g
Energy	608 kJ	405 kJ
Protein	4.2 g	2.8 g
Fat, total	7.4 g	4.9 g
-saturated	4.5 g	3.0 g
Carbohydrate, total	18.6 g	12.4 g
-sugars	18.6 g	12.4 g
Sodium	90 mg	60 mg
Calcium	00 mg/38%*	200 mg
* Percentage of recommended dietary intake		
<b>Ingredients:</b> Whole milk, concentrated skim milk, sugar, strawberries (9%), gelatine, culture, thickener (1442)		

## Here's what to look for:

**Servings:** Information must show per serving and per 100g. As there are very few standard serve sizes, you need to check if the serving is realistic. This 450g tub of yoghurt contains three serves and a total of 1800 kJ.

**Energy:** The number of kilojoules provided. To obtain calories divide by 4.2 (i.e., 608 kJ = 145 Cal). Each gram of fat has 37 kJ. Carbohydrate and protein contain 17 kJ per gram.

**Protein:** Your body needs protein for growth, maintenance and repair. Foods that contain protein help you feel full and satisfied.

**Fat:** While energy dense, fat is an essential dietary component. It carries vitamins, is necessary for the structure cells, is vital for healthy hair and skin, and brain and bowel function would suffer without it.

**Carbohydrate:** This usually appears as 'Total' and 'Sugars'. Total carbohydrate comprises starch, dietary fibre and simple sugars. By looking at the ingredients you can see that the yoghurt contains natural sugar (lactose) in the milk and added sugar. Try to reduce added sugars where possible.

**Sodium:** In excessive amounts, sodium can contribute to high blood pressure and other health problems. Aim to eat less sodium each day, preferably less than 2300mg.

**Calcium:** This is only required to appear on a NIP if the food makes a claim for calcium. Calcium is important for strong bones.