

What the Label Doesn't Tell You

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It has been nearly 20 years since the government overhauled food labels. Since then, companies have come up with new schemes to trick consumers. And some older problems were never fixed the first time around. Here's how the food label can trip you up ... and what a new, improved label might look like.

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Snapshot

350 CALORIES Per Serving **14** SERVINGS Per Box

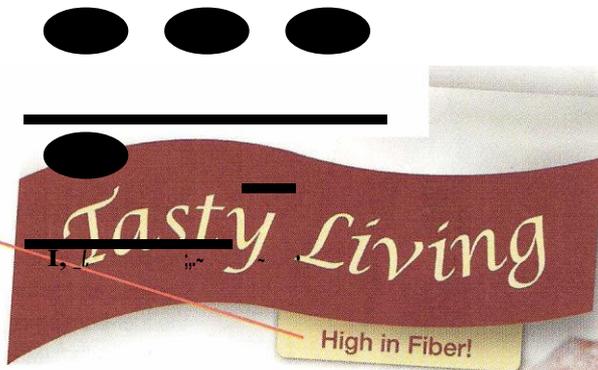
- Saturated Fat 5 g
- Added Sugars 30 g
- Sodium 290mg

More Information on Side Panel

A food with 5 grams of saturated fat per serving shouldn't be allowed to boast that it has 0 grams of trans fat.

The government should require symbols that give shoppers a quick snapshot of the food's key nutrients.

The label shouldn't count polydextrose, maltodextrin, or similar isolated fibers as equal to the intact, natural fiber in whole grains, beans, or vegetables.



Made with Whole Wheat!

The claim should reveal what percent of the grain is whole.

Made with REAL Coffee

If a food is made with coffee, caffeine, or guarana, the label should tell you how much caffeine is in a serving.



Any food that contains high-fructose corn syrup is not all natural.

Some foods make an immunity claim because they contain a vitamin or two. That's deceptive and shouldn't be allowed.

When an ingredient appears on the label or in the food's name, the label should reveal how much of the ingredient the food contains.

Many labels claim that a food or ingredient can "support," "enhance," or "maintain" your joints, bones, heart, breasts, prostate, digestive health, etc. Most claims aren't backed by much evidence.