



Nutrition Ranking System



Nutrition Ranking Criteria by Food Category

FRUITS & VEGETABLES
3 - BEST
All fresh fruits and vegetables
Canned, dried, and frozen fruits in own juice or unsweetened
Canned, dried, and frozen vegetables with <275 mg sodium per label serving
All canned, dried, and frozen fruits and vegetables with no added sugar in ingredients
2 - BETTER
Canned and frozen fruits in light syrup or with <20 grams sugar per 1/2 cup serving
If sugar added, dried fruit with <20 grams sugar per 1/4 cup serving
If sugar added, canned and frozen vegetables with <15 grams sugar per label serving
Canned, dried, and frozen vegetables with <600 mg sodium per label serving
1 - GOOD
Canned and frozen fruit in medium to heavy syrup or with more than 20 grams of sugar per 1/2 cup serving
If sugar added, dried fruit with more than 20 grams of sugar per 1/4 cup serving
If sugar added, canned and frozen vegetables with more than 15 grams of sugar per label serving
Canned, dried, and frozen with more than 600 mg of sodium per label serving

PROTEINS - Meats & Other Proteins
3 - BEST
<300 mg sodium per 4 oz serving OR <175 mg sodium per 2 oz serving
<5 grams saturated fat OR sugar per label serving
2 - BETTER
<600 mg sodium per 4 oz serving
<350 mg sodium per 2 oz serving (Exception: for generally healthy food, can consider "better" if within 25 mg of sodium)
<10 grams saturated fat OR sugar per label serving
1 - GOOD
Meats and other proteins with more than 600 mg of sodium per 4 oz serving OR more than 350 mg of sodium per 2 oz serving
Meats and other proteins with more than 10 grams of saturated fat OR sugar per label serving

DAIRY
3 - BEST
All plain, unsweetened milk, milk alternatives, and yogurts (no added sugar in ingredients)
100% natural cheeses (no pasteurized processed or pasteurized prepared cheeses)
<200 mg sodium per 1 ounce serving cheese or per 1 cup milk, milk alternative, or yogurt
At least 20% DV calcium per serving
2 - BETTER
Flavored milk, milk alternatives and yogurt <25g sugar per 1 cup serving
Pasteurized processed or prepared cheeses that meet sodium and dairy requirements below
<350 mg sodium per 1 ounce serving cheese OR per 1 cup milk, milk alternative, or yogurt
At least 15% DV calcium per serving
1 - GOOD
Flavored milk and milk alternatives and flavored yogurt with more than 25g of sugar per 1 cup serving
Pasteurized processed or prepared cheeses that meet sodium and dairy requirements below
More than 350 mg of sodium per 1 ounce serving cheese OR per 1 cup milk, milk alternative, or yogurt
At least 10% DV calcium per serving

SNACKS
3 - BEST
<200 mg sodium per serving
No added sugar, unsweetened, or in own juice
2 - BETTER
<400 mg sodium per serving
If sugar added, <15 grams sugar per serving
1 - GOOD
Snacks with more than 400 mg of sodium per serving
If sugar added, snacks with more than 15 grams of sugar per serving

GRAINS
3 - BEST
All plain, unprocessed whole grains used in cooking (i.e. brown rice, etc.)
All 100% whole grain or more than 8 grams of whole grain per 30 gram serving
If sugar added, <15 grams sugar per serving
<150 mg sodium per serving
2 - BETTER
All plain, unprocessed refined grains used in cooking with no sodium or sugar added (i.e. white rice, etc.)
<8 grams of whole grain per 30 gram serving
<375 mg sodium per serving
If sugar added, <20 grams sugar per serving
1 - GOOD
All processed, boxed meals that do not meet whole grain, sodium, or sugar requirements:
Grains with less than 8 grams of whole grain per 30 gram serving
Grains with more than 375 mg of sodium per serving
Grains with more than 20 grams of sugar per serving

PROTEINS - Beans & Lentils
3 - BEST
All dried beans or lentils
If canned, <275 mg sodium per label serving
No added sugar in ingredients
2 - BETTER
If canned, <600 mg sodium per label serving
If sugar added, <15 grams sugar per label serving
1 - GOOD
Canned beans and lentils with more than 600 mg of sodium per label serving
Canned beans and lentils with more than 15 grams of sugar per label serving

CONDIMENTS & COOKING
3 - BEST
Ingredients that are used to promote scratch cooking (spices, flours, oils, fats)
Plain spices and herbs (or blend with no sodium added)
Plain white or wheat flours
Plain oils or fats (no partially hydrogenated oils)
2 - BETTER
Ingredients that are used to promote scratch cooking or baking (i.e. sugars, some condiments/sauces)
<150 mg sodium per serving (Exception: if used to promote from scratch cooking, then <1000 mg per serving - i.e. fish sauce, broth)
No partially hydrogenated oils
<20g sugar per serving
1 - GOOD
Condiments and cooking ingredients that do not meet the criteria above:
More than 150 mg of sodium per serving
Contain partially hydrogenated oils
More than 20 grams of sugar per serving

SOUPS
3 - BEST
<600 mg sodium per 1 cup serving of soup
<600 mg sodium per 1/2 cup serving of condensed soups (i.e. chicken noodle or tomato)
2 - BETTER
<800 mg sodium per 1 cup serving of soup (Exception: If used to promote cooking, must be <1000 mg per serving - i.e. broth or bouillon)
<800 mg sodium per 1/2 cup serving of condensed soups
1 - GOOD
Soups with more than 800 mg of sodium per 1 cup serving soup
Soups with more than 800 mg of sodium per 1/2 cup serving of condensed soups

THINGS THAT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OR DISTRIBUTED:

All diet or regular sodas and energy drinks
Candy (not including baking ingredients)

Cookies and other sweet snacks
Chips (excluding tortilla chips)

NOTE: Some exceptions may apply to any of these categories based on the nutritional value of the foods.