



Crack the Code: *Reading and Understanding Product Labels*

The ability to read and understand labels can help us to become empowered and knowledgeable grocery shoppers. Understanding what we are eating is key in helping us navigate around the supermarket when our nutritional practitioner is not attached at the hip. It's amazing how many sections of the grocery store should be blocked off with yellow tape cautioning "enter at your own risk" and it's no surprise why so many degenerative diseases are on the rise. We are becoming what we eat, unhealthy.

The main reason why many conditions such as Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, Crohn's disease and colitis, obesity and several others are so prevalent in today's society is because we are simply not educated enough on what we are sending down our esophagus.

Items that we trust and think are healthy because of their wholesome looking packaging might actually be detrimental to our health in the long run. Take canned or packaged soups for example. While the Chinese food restaurants took the blows for using MSG (monosodium glutamate) in the food, look again and read the ingredients and see how many soups have it listed on their label. Food additives are not natural to the body and can have long term effects ranging from allergies, asthma, nausea, headaches, vertigo and dizziness to cancer.

A few examples of some food additives to look out for and avoid as much as possible include:

- MSG : a flavour enhancer often found in packaged and canned foods
- Sulfites: preservatives that are found in many red wines and dried fruits as well as several other products
- Nitrates: a preservative often used in smoked luncheon meats and bacon to preserve colour
- Tartrazine : also known as Yellow # 5, this is a food dye
- BHA and BHT: preservatives often used and listed on cereal boxes and many drug store supplements

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HEALTHY COOKING



Quinoa (*keen-wah*)

Quinoa is often referred to as an ancient grain, but is technically the seed of a leafy green vegetable similar to spinach. It is a complete source of protein and promotes:

- tissue growth and repair
- heart health as it contains fibre to reduce LDL cholesterol levels and contains magnesium that relaxes the blood vessels to help lower the risk of hypertension
- energy production as it is a concentrated source of dietary iron and contains phosphorus also needed by the cells to create energy
- very good source of manganese which plays an important role in support bone density

LET'S EAT

How to Cook Quinoa

It is important that you rinse your quinoa thoroughly before cooking. It has a 'saponin' on its coat that acts as a natural pesticide.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup quinoa
- 1 ½ cups of water or low sodium soup stock

Directions:

1. Put quinoa in a sieve and hold under water until it is not 'soapy' anymore. This usually takes about a minute or two. (not rinsing thoroughly can cause it to taste bitter).
2. Pour 1 cup of soup stock and ½ cup of water in a sauce pan along with 1 cup of quinoa, put lid on.
3. Bring to a boil, then turn the burner right down to low and let sit for 20-25 minutes (lid on).
4. Fluff with a fork and add to soup, cool then add to a salad, eat with a stir fry or with fish and steamed veggies with a bit of lemon and soy sauce.

You can add anything you want to add more flavor such as onions (any kind) mushrooms, a dash of curry powder, garlic, ginger, wheat free tamari soy sauce...