Reading Labels – Counting Calories

(CICO) Calories in – Calories Out

The most asked question: “I know what I like, why should I read those confusing labels.”

First, we must acknowledge that the body is the most exquisite Chemical Factory ever designed. Everything that you consume gets broken down into smaller and smaller pieces until the only thing that exists are the different molecules. Each one of those molecules has a direct effect on our bodies and our health. If we don’t have the correct amounts of nutrients, in the proper ratios, our assimilation will suffer.

One of the first things to look for is ***Serving Size***. This indicates the overall size or amount of the product, which contain the amounts listed in the breakdown of the food.

NOTE: Most All Nutrition Facts (percent of daily values) are based on a 2000 calorie diet.

Categories of Macro-Nutrients: 1. Carbohydrates 2. Protein 3. Fat 4. Fiber

Anything not a protein or fat is considered a Carbohydrate.

Carbohydrates: (4 calories per gram) All carbohydrates with the exception of fiber, contain substances that when broken down, become glucose (blood sugar)

Fiber: Falls into the Carbohydrate category but contains zero (0) calories. Fiber comes in two varieties, Soluble and Insoluble.

Protein: (4 calories per gram) When digested produces Amino Acids, which are used to maintain muscle strength and integrity. Proteins are also used in the creation of hormones, amino acids, and other chemical messengers.

Fats: (9 calories per gram) When digested fats are broken down into Fatty Acids. They provide a myriad of benefits for the body. Fats on labels are broken down into four Categories.

1. Saturated
2. Polyunsaturated
3. Monounsaturated
4. Trans Fats or Hydrogenated Fats – Processed fats to stay away from.

Alcohol: (7 calories per gram) one ounce of alcohol contains 28.35 grams. Or 198 calories.

Total Carbohydrates: this number is made up of both the fiber and regular carbohydrates. To find out how many of those carbohydrates contribute sugar to your body, subtract the fiber (grams or calories) from the total carbohydrates.

1. Some foods will contribute more sugar than others. Simple sugars (white sugar) or (high fructose corn syrup) both have a very ***High Glycemic Factor***. The sugar goes directly from the stomach into the blood stream.
2. Choose foods that have a ***Low Glycemic Factor*** for good health and weight loss.
3. *Choose foods that are high in fiber content*, both soluble and insoluble.

Then comes ***Calories per serving***: If you want to determine your calorie-intake, this number becomes very important. Keeping track of the number of calories (per day) will allow you to predict whether you're going to gain, lose or maintain your weight.

BMR (Basil Metabolic Rate) – The number of calories you would burn per day if you did nothing. It indicates the minimal number of calories you need to keep your body functioning. Google BMR calculator on the internet for your number.

TEE (Total Energy Expenditure) – Rough estimate of the number of calories your body will burn each day. Take your body weight times the number 11.

(160 weight times 11) equals 1760 calories.

(120 weight times 11) equals 1320 calories.

CICO – (Calories In – Calories Out) It stands to reason that if we consume more calories than we use, we will gain weight. The extra calories must go someplace, so they are converted to triglycerides and stored as fat. By the same token, if we consume less calories than we expend, then chances are we will burn the excess fat the body has put on.

When looking at Total Carbohydrates, the amount of sugar is important. Every 4 grams of sugar, equals one teaspoon of sugar.

A can of coke contains approximately 40 grams of sugar, 10 teaspoons in 12 ounces. That amount in a short period of time is not good for the body.

The amount of fat required for good health should run between 15 and 25%. Good fats such as EPA and DHA are preferable, over saturated fats.

Carbohydrates should be balanced against Protein. Desiring to stay in a (Keto Zone) so you can lose weight. Try a ratio of 1.25 Carbohydrates to protein. Round numbers (400 calories of Carbs, 320 calories of Protein and 300 calories of good fat), plus 25 to 35 grams of fiber per day.