The 5 Clues for Nutrition Detectives™



1. Don't be fooled by the BIG letters on the front of the package. Look for the small letters on the Nutrition Facts label and ingredient list.

The front of a food package is like a commercial to talk you into buying that product. Look for the true facts on the food label and ingredient list.



2. The FIRST ingredient on the list is always the BIGGEST! Ingredients on food packages are always listed in the order of quantity. A food is mostly made up of the ingredients that come first, just like the first duck is the biggest! The FIRST ingredient makes up the largest amount of the product by weight. The SECOND ingredient is the one in the next-largest amount, and so on. Are the FIRST or SECOND ingredients good for you? If not, choose other foods that are better for your health.



3. Avoid foods that contain partially hydrogenated oil and high fructose corn syrup. It's like finding Fingers the Fox! Look for these words on a busy nutrition label, in the same way you'd look for someone in a busy crowd. Partially hydrogenated oil is another name for trans fat, a kind of fat which can harm your health. If eaten often, it can raise cholesterol levels and promote heart disease. High fructose corn syrup is a form of sugar added to food products. If you find these words, you'll know that the food contains unhealthful ingredients.



4. Avoid foods with a LONG INGREDIENT LIST!

Foods with shorter lists tend to be more wholesome. They usually have fewer added ingredients. Long lists may hide things that your body doesn't need, such as artificial flavors and dyes, or preservatives. Fresh fruits and vegetables have the shortest list! They're natural foods packed with good nutrients, and they have just one ingredient!



5. Fiber is your friend! Beware of whole grain imposters.
Choose breads, cereals, granola bars, crackers & pasta with at least 2 grams of fiber per serving.

Look for products made from whole grains. They should contain at least 2 grams of fiber per serving. Products that have less fiber or don't say "whole grain" on the label are whole grain "imposters."