

# Facilitator's Guide



FRESH  
CONVERSATIONS



Volume 9, Issue 2

## Staying whole in a processed world

### Background Information (optional):

- [High Fructose Corn Syrup](#)
- [Grocery Shopping Mistakes to Avoid](#)
- [Food Label Guide](#)
- [Food Packaging Claims](#)

### Behavior Goals

1. Understand which nutrients to look for and which to avoid on a nutrition food label.
2. Identify the meanings of health claims on food packages.
3. Be able to identify that being physically active can be interesting.

### Meeting Preparation:

1. Review the newsletter. Send questions or concerns to your coordinator.
2. Review the background resources (website links are provided above).
3. Choose one of the recipe options. Make the recipe at least once before the meeting. Write down helpful hints for the group. If virtual, have ideas on what to share about the recipe you tried.
4. Determine how to transport and taste featured food tasting.
5. If the meeting is virtual, prepare ideas for how to engage participants in the recipe making process.
  - a. Prepare a grocery list for the recipe chosen that can be sent with newsletter for participants to purchase
  - b. Demonstrate recipe on video and direct participants to the recipe in the newsletter.
  - c. If conference call: create a conversation about the recipe: serving size, freezing instructions, tips, discussion on ingredients, nutrition etc.

*Continued on page 2*

The suggested wording for the presentation is in regular font and the facilitator directions are in ***bold, dark red italic.***

It's best not to read the presentation, but to use your own words, staying close to the meaning.

## Props:

1. Comparison of 2 Salad Mixes, Whole Grain Bread Package, Yogurt Package (Virtual can show nutrition facts labels)
2. Other examples of Nutrition Facts Labels
3. Optional: Pictures or Powerpoint to visualize going through a grocery store

## Conversation

Welcome to Fresh Conversations! We are so glad you joined us today! Last meeting we started our discussion on processed foods. We talked about the health consequences of ultra processed foods. Let's take a few moments to share anything you found interesting.

***Allow time for participants to discuss. Reminder the definition of processed is: A processed food is any food that has been altered in some way through preparation or cooking. Food processing might mean just simple things like cutting and cooking. Or it could mean doing more complicated things like pasteurizing or refining. It can make raw foods more tasty, reduce waste and also make them more convenient to use.***

We also discussed some healthier options to stock up your pantry for times of emergency.

***Allow time to share.***

## Introduction

This is the 2nd newsletter in a series of 3 on processed foods. Today we are going to dive a bit deeper in the grocery shopping experience by looking closer at food labels. We will discuss specific words to look for and words to avoid.

## Nutrition Discussion

Let's begin our discussion by virtually taking a stroll through the grocery store and making our own grocery lists.

***Facilitator can use pictures or a PowerPoint of each section to pretend like you are traveling through a grocery store.***

Where do you start?

***I typically start in the produce aisle. Think about how you make your decisions in this section. Is it price? Do you look for sales? What are some staples from this section you always have in your cart? (Bananas, Salads, Cucumbers).***

Let's compare 2 pre-made salad mixes. Are there any words that pop out at you on the front of the package that would encourage you to buy it?

Next, on to the bakery or the bread aisle. Think of what is important enough to you in this section to get a place in your cart. What do you look for? Do you choose familiarity in this section? Brands you are comfortable with?

Think about some food claims you see in this section.

Can you think of any words commonly seen on packages of bread products? (*White, Wheat, Multigrain, Whole Grain*). *Allow time to talk through some of these.*

The gold standard in the bread aisle is “whole grain.” Whole is the “it” word when it comes to bread products. This can be found by taking a quick look at the nutrition facts label ingredient list. If whole is the first word, it would be considered the all mighty “whole grain.” Multigrain is defined as a product that contains more than one type of grain. This doesn’t mean any of the grains are whole. This is a common claim that can be used on the outside of packaging for marketing.

*Show a whole grain bread product and where to find that on the nutrition facts label.*

What’s next? The shelf stable middle aisles. What are some staples from these aisles? What types of things influence your decision in this section? This is where a bulk of decision making takes place during grocery shopping. What types of claims have you seen on packages?

*Allow time to talk through each of these questions. Examples from these aisles include cereals, canned vegetables and fruits, condiments, baking ingredients, etc.*

Let’s talk about a few common claims used for marketing. The FDA has legally defined the claims that can be used on food labels.

*Refer to newsletter page #2 for the chart with some of the nutrient claims.*

Last meeting we talked about foods labeled with fat free claims. Many cookies, crackers, fruit snacks are marketed as “fat free” or “low fat.” For example, a fruit snack package claims “fat free” but shows added sugars of 11g or 22% DV per package. This shows that even though it is labeled a certain way on the outside of the package, it may not be a healthful part of your diet. Does anyone else have an example?

*Allow time to discuss. Facilitators could be prepared with other examples of foods labeled as low fat or no fat but have high sugar contents. Examples include low-fat coffee drink, low-fat yogurt, low-fat muffins, etc.*

Lastly, let’s talk about dairy. Do you ever look at the yogurt section and wonder when it grew so much? The number of options is endless. What do you look for in this section? Do you look for brand familiarity? Do you look for prices or sales? Many flavored yogurts can be loaded with added sugars.

***Allow time to discuss each of these questions. Facilitators can show a picture of a yogurt package and where to find added sugars. You can visually show how much sugar that is using teaspoons. You can scoop the number of teaspoons into a clear cup. Example yogurt with 12 g added sugars would be 3 teaspoons of sugar.***

But why do all of these words matter? When shopping in the grocery store, it's easy to get overwhelmed by all of the choices but equipping yourself with this knowledge to come prepared will help you to make "better for you" choices.

***Allow time for any comments, questions, or discussion.***

## Challenge

Before our next meeting, look through your pantry and find a product that has more than 10% of sodium, added sugars, or saturated fats. Make a note of this product and look in the store for a similar product that meets the 5% or less goal.

## Physical Activity:

The newsletter talks about walking around your neighborhood. Does anyone have a favorite path they take? Why do you find that route interesting and enjoyable?

The newsletter also discusses ways to make your walk more interesting. The first two suggestions talk about locations for an interesting walk.

1. Taking a walk at a different location, other than your home. Maybe a trail or park, or from the senior center or church.
2. Taking a walk to run an errand where you would normally drive.

Does anyone try to diversify their walk from the usual route to keep things interesting?

***Allow time for participant discussion. Be prepared to share an interesting place you walk and/or an errand where you have replaced a car trip with a walk.***

The second two suggestions provide more ideas for entertainment on the walk.

1. Researching community history and exploring on a walk.
2. Finding a book or podcast to listen to on the walk.

Has anyone done either of these things?

***Allow time for participant discussion. Be prepared to share ideas for entertainment you have used on a walk or something similar.***

***Facilitator Note: If questions about specific podcasts for older adults, here are a few examples. TED Talks, Lux Radio Theater, Freakonomics Radio, Stuff You Missed in History Class, This American Life, The Daily***

When out for interesting walks it is always important to remember to keep safety in mind. Some tips to keep in mind especially when walking in a new location:

- Let someone know where you are going.
- Take a cell phone.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Take a walking buddy for companionship.
- Keep the volume of your headphones at a reasonable level so you can hear others, cars, etc.

*Allow time for discussion.*

## Tasting Activities:

### 1. Pizza on a Potato (preferred):

- <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/pizza-on-a-potato/>
- Add different toppings, just like you would a potato. Keep in mind this will change the nutrition facts.
  - Add a source of protein like ground beef or chicken. Meat should be cooked ahead of time, not in the oven or microwave on the potato. Make sure it reaches at least 160F.
  - Use beans as a protein source, add some enchilada or taco seasonings or sauce to change the theme!
  - Add more veggies! Like broccoli, tomatoes or mushrooms.
  - Try a different sauce, use buffalo or barbecue sauce instead.
- Wash your potato before baking or microwaving.
- Instead of using a russet potato you can use smaller potatoes such as Yukon gold or red potatoes.
- This could be an alternative to something processed such as a frozen pizza or frozen burrito.

### 2. Easy Bean Dip

- <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/easy-bean-dip/>
- Encourage them to get creative with using different spices/herbs they enjoy.
  - Chili Powder (if they would like it spicier)
  - Garlic Powder
  - Lime Juice
  - Dried Oregano
  - Cilantro
- Encourage them to look for “no added sodium” beans. You can show them an example.
- This can be enjoyed with fresh vegetables such as carrots, cauliflower, or other raw vegetables.
- If 6 servings is too much, consider making ½ of the recipe and freezing the remainder of the can of beans for up to 3 months. Another option could be the full recipe can be made and the remaining portion can be frozen to be enjoyed later. Be sure to freeze in a sealed freezer bag with label and date. If using whole beans from a can (for example black or pinto beans), beans should be drained before frozen.

## Take Action

Let's turn to page 3 of the newsletter to talk about a goal and action steps related to health. Try to think of a larger goal you want to accomplish. Could be for the next month, or the whole year. Then think of some smaller steps or actions that will help you reach that goal.

*Here are some possible ideas to consider.*

- 1. I would like to be able to walk 2 miles. Each week during my walks I will plan on adding one extra block until I reach my goal.*
- 2. I would like to eat less added sugar this year. I eat yogurt every day. This week, I will look for yogurt with less added sugars.*
- 3. I have been feeling more lonely lately. I would like to be more social. This month I will make a phone call to an old friend to catch up.*