



**Metabolic Code**<sup>®</sup>  
unlock your healthiest you

# Label Reading Basics

**Weight Loss - Week 2**





## Label Reading Basics

The Metabolic Code® Diet is built around foods which generally don't contain a nutrition facts label (lean proteins, non-starchy vegetables, healthy fats) but there are a handful of 'labeled' foods which can provide short-cuts to healthy eating. People try to use labels to determine if a food is healthy, but there are many foods that could be considered healthy by some standards which may throw you off on this way of eating.



**For example,** a food may contain whole grains, but that means it could contain wheat, which is eliminated in Phase 1. Or a protein powder may contain soy or whey, which are allergenic foods that are eliminated on Phase 1.



The trick with label reading is to use the information to answer a few questions listed below in order of importance:

- **Do the ingredients contain wheat or cow's milk ingredients?**
- **Is the food a starchy food** – containing grains, like rice or corn or potatoes. If it contains corn, such as some frozen rice blends, corn is food to be tested in Phase 2.
- **Is this food high in sugar?** Dark chocolate squares are allowed after the first two weeks. Make sure to choose one with no wheat flour and lower sugar (allows a bigger serving).





## Label Reading Basics

Before analyzing any food label think about the category that this food fits into: Vegetable? Fruit? Grain or Starch? Dessert? Lean Protein? Is this food processed? Do you recognize all of the ingredients? Does it have a short or long ingredient list?



## Safe 'Labeled' Foods:

- **Frozen Foods:** organic vegetables, organic fruits
- **Beans:** canned beans or dried beans (ideally organic)
- **Condiments:** olive oil, olive oil based salad dressings, tomato sauce, tomato paste, hot sauce, mustard, vinegar, mayonnaise, bean dip, relish, chicken and vegetable broths
- **Spices:** spice grinders and seasoning packets.
- **Coffee and Tea**
- **Nut and Seeds found in**



## Tricky Tomato Sauce

Use caution with tomato sauce – based ingredients like spaghetti sauce or salsa. The trick is to look for versions with no added sugar, which is easy with spaghetti sauce. Don't get confused with labels that say they contain 2 or 3 grams of sugar. As long as there is no sugar listed as an ingredient, this is from the natural sugars in the tomato. We use caution with sugar, because it stimulates appetite.



## Do the Ingredients Meet the Standards of the Diet?

Wheat free, dairy free and low sugar and carb. In general, avoid products which contain sugar in the first two or three ingredients. An exception might be a dark chocolate where sugar is the 3rd ingredient, but a quarter of the bar only contains 3 sugars.

Try to avoid unpronounceable additives, sweeteners, preservations and dyes. Many processed food contain MSG (monosodium glutamate) which should be avoided due to the potential for adverse reactions and its appetite stimulating properties. Always avoid partially hydrogenated oils, because they contain trans fats which alter our cell membranes and increase health risk dramatically. Avoid high fructose corn syrup, or sweeteners ending in 'ose'.



## In Summary

- **It is ideal to buy foods in their most basic form** (straightforward proteins, vegetables, fats, spices, beans etc.).
- **Some shortcut foods are allowed** (pasta sauce, premade salads dressing, black bean dip, almond milk) and when shopping look at the sugar content on the label. Aim for no more than 5 grams of sugar per serving or make sure to eat very small amounts.
- **Look at the ingredient list and make sure the product contains non-artificial, whole food ingredients.**
- **Avoid starchy foods not allowed on the diet, such as corn. Beans and legumes are the only starchy foods allowed in the first 2 weeks of the diet. Grains and starches like rice and potatoes can be swapped out for beans after 2 weeks, as shown on "My Metabolic Code Plate". Some people can continue to lose weight adding 1 or 2 starchy food servings per day, as shown in the Phase 2 Quick guide. Ideally, food allergens should be avoided for at least 3- 4 weeks, before doing a Phase 2 food trial reintroduction process.**

*Be careful of unexpected added sugars. Always read the labels as product formulations can change. For example: some frozen fruit blends can contain added sugar and some sweetened almond milks can look almost identical to their unsweetened versions.*