May 26, 2016 – Grand Rapids, MI

Improvements in the Nutrition Facts Labels

The new nutrition facts labels are out and as promised, I'm going to tell you what I think is important about them. Let's get right to it.

- The listing of **calories per serving** is large enough that you can actually read it without searching for it. This is the biggest positive change; I had problems finding it at times and now, it's the biggest type on the label.
- The **serving size** is clearly identifiable. This should eliminate the misdirection food manufacturers used to use to suggest that a half-cup of ice cream is a serving size. A half cup? I don't know what color the sky is in their world, but it's being changed to the same color we all see now.
- The amount of **added sugar** is listed. You might think this is directed at the soda and cookie industry, but did you ever check to see how much sugar is added to foods people think are healthy such as granola bars or pasta sauce? No escape now. I'm not opposed to adding sugar, but at least everyone will know how much is being added.

- The nutrition labels will add the **amounts of vitamin D and potassium** to them because research shows they're important for everyone—not just in percentages of the Daily Value but in actual amounts, whether mg or mcg. That's the only way you can really calculate how much of a nutrient you're getting.

Those are the changes that are most important from my perspective. The only downside is that manufacturers have two years to comply. Let's see who goes first; it may mean they're the ones with the least to hide.

Saturday is Memorial Day weekend and everyone will be somewhere doing something, so we'll take a few days off from science. Enjoy yourself, be safe, and I'll talk to you on Tuesday.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

Reference: http://1.usa.gov/1qEOcEt

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