

American Heart Association Heart-Check Food Certification Program Nutrition Requirements



The Heart-Check Program has six different categories of certification, and each category has a different set of nutrition requirements. All products must meet government regulatory requirements for making a coronary heart disease health claim. The specific health claim corresponding to each certification category is indicated by docket or CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) number in column headers below. Most nutrient requirements are per FDA/USDA RACC amounts (RACC = Reference Amount Customarily Consumed or “standardized serving size”). Some are per additional or other measurement amounts as noted below with asterisk. Main Dish and Meal Products do not have RACC amounts.

g = grams mg = milligrams oz = ounces fl oz = fluid ounces DV = Daily Value

	Standard** Docket # 2006Q-0458	Standard “Extra Lean” (meat and seafood) 21 CFR 101.75	Main Dish and Meal Products 21 CFR 101.75	Whole Grain with required levels of whole grain and dietary fiber Docket # 03Q-0547
Total Fat	less than 6.5 g	less than 5 g also per 100 g*	3 g or less per 100 g of product* and 30% or less calories from fat	less than 6.5 g
Saturated Fat	1 g or less and 15% or less calories from saturated fat	less than 2 g also per 100 g*	1 g or less per 100 g of product* and less than 10% calories from saturated fat	1 g or less and 15% of less calories from saturated fat
Trans Fat	less than 0.5 g also per label serving* Products containing partially hydrogenated oils are not eligible for certification	less than 0.5 g also per label serving* Products containing partially hydrogenated oils are not eligible for certification	less than 0.5 g also per label serving* Products containing partially hydrogenated oils are not eligible for certification	less than 0.5 g also per label serving* Products containing partially hydrogenated oils are not eligible for certification
Cholesterol	20 mg or less	less than 95 mg also per 100 g*	20 mg or less per 100 g of product*	20 mg or less
Sodium	One of four sodium limits applies based on food category: up to 140 mg, 240 mg, or 360 mg per label serving*, or 480 mg per label serving and per RACC*. See Sodium Limits by Category at heartcheck.org for details.	One of four sodium limits applies based on food category: up to 140 mg, 240 mg, or 360 mg per label serving*, or 480 mg per label serving and per RACC*. See Sodium Limits by Category at heartcheck.org for details.	600 mg or less per label serving*	One of four sodium limits applies based on food category: up to 140 mg, 240 mg, or 360 mg per label serving*, or 480 mg per label serving and per RACC*. See Sodium Limits by Category at heartcheck.org for details.
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	10% or more Daily Value (DV) of 1 of 6 nutrients: vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber	10% or more DV of 1 of 6 nutrients: vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber	10% or more DV of 1 of 6 nutrients: vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber per the entire main dish or meal*	10% or more DV of 1 of 6 nutrients: vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber
Whole Grain Content	N/A	N/A	N/A	51% or more by weight/RACC
Minimum Dietary Fiber (from whole grain only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.7 g per RACC of 30 g 2.5 g per RACC of 45 g 2.8 g per RACC of 50 g 3.0 g per RACC of 55 g

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	Standard**	Standard "Extra Lean"	Main Dish and Meal Products	Whole Grain
Additional Food Category-Specific Requirements	<p>Grain-Based Products Certifiable products include breads, biscuits, cereals (ready-to-eat & cooked), crackers, pancakes, French toast, waffles, muffins, sweet quick-type breads, and pastas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dietary fiber: 10% or more DV per RACC Sugars (total): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 7 g or less per serving if good source of dietary fiber (10-19% DV per RACC) – 9 g or less per serving if excellent source of dietary fiber (20% or more DV per RACC) <p><i>Sugars from pieces of fruit do not count toward the sugars allowance but amount(s) and source(s) must be disclosed</i></p> <p>Yogurt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 g or less sugars (total) per standard 6 oz serving <p>Milk & Milk Alternatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 130 or less calories per 8 fl oz <p>Fruit/Vegetable Juices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% juice (or 100% juice plus water) with no added sugars/sweeteners (excludes non-nutritive sweeteners) 120 or less calories per 8 fl oz 10% DV for 3 nutrients for which a DV exists – at least one of these beneficial nutrients must satisfy the 10% DV level requirement <p>Canned Fruits/Vegetables (including potatoes and sweet potatoes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No "Heavy Syrup" allowed <p>Frozen Fruit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% fruit (no added sugars) 	N/A	N/A	<p>Grain-Based Products Certifiable products include breads, biscuits, cereals (ready-to-eat & cooked), crackers, pancakes, French toast, waffles, muffins, sweet quick-type breads, and pastas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dietary fiber: 10% or more DV per RACC Sugars (total): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 7 g or less per serving if good source of dietary fiber (10-19% DV per RACC) – 9 g or less per serving if excellent source of dietary fiber (20% or more DV per RACC) <p><i>Sugars from pieces of fruit do not count toward the sugars allowance but amount(s) and source(s) must be disclosed</i></p>
Category Examples Include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bakery products (breads, crackers) Beans and legumes Cereals and other grain products (pasta, rice) Dairy (yogurt, milk, cheese) Fruits Juice Mixed dishes (casseroles, spaghetti with sauce) Potatoes Soups (without meat or seafood) Vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canned meat and seafood Deli meats Fresh and frozen meat Soups (with meat/seafood) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frozen and packaged meals and entrees (minimum 6 oz) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bread Cereal Pasta Tortillas

* Measurement amounts in addition to or instead of RACC

** This category only applies to FDA-regulated products.

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	Nuts (whole or chopped) Docket # 02P-0505	Fish with required level of Omega-3 Fatty Acids Docket # 2003Q-0401	Olive Oil Docket # 2003Q-0059	Canola Oil Docket # 2006Q-0091	Corn Oil Docket # 2006P-0243
Total Fat	no limit	16 g or less	no limit	no limit	no limit
Saturated Fat	4 g or less per 50 g only*	4 g or less	4 g or less also per labeled serving (not per 50 g)*	1 g or less also per labeled serving* and no more than 15% calories from saturated fat	4 g or less also per labeled serving (not per 50 g)*
Trans Fat	less than 0.5 g also per label serving*	less than 0.5 g also per label serving*	less than 0.5 g also per 50 g* Products containing partially hydrogenated oils are not eligible for certification.	less than 0.5 g also per 50 g* Products containing partially hydrogenated oils are not eligible for certification.	less than 0.5 g also per 50 g* Products containing partially hydrogenated oils are not eligible for certification.
Cholesterol	0 mg per label serving*	less than 95 mg also per 100 g*	20 mg or less also per 50 g*	20 mg or less also per 50 g*	20 mg or less also per 50 g*
Sodium	140 mg or less per label serving*	One of four sodium limits applies based on food category: up to 140 mg, 240 mg, or 360 mg per label serving*, or 480 mg per label serving and per RACC*. See Sodium Limits by Category at heartcheck.org for details.	0 mg	0 mg	0 mg
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	10% or more Daily Value of 1 of 6 nutrients: vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber (not applicable to walnuts)	10% or more Daily Value of 1 of 6 nutrients: vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber	N/A	N/A	N/A
Omega-3 Fatty Acids (EPA & DHA)	N/A	500 mg or more per 85 g (3 oz) cooked*	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other	Eligible nuts: almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, pistachios, walnuts and some pine nuts Added Fats: less than 0.5 g per RACC Added Carbohydrates: less than 1 g per RACC Amount(s) and source(s) of added fats and carbohydrates must be disclosed	Added Fats: less than 0.5 g per RACC Added Carbohydrates: less than 1 g per RACC Amount(s) and source(s) of added fats and carbohydrates must be disclosed	Pure olive oil only	Pure canola/rapeseed oil only	Pure corn oil and vegetable oil blends containing at least 4 g corn oil per RACC only

* Measurement amounts in addition to or instead of RACC

The AHA Heart-Check Food Certification Program is designed to help consumers make informed choices about the foods they purchase. The nutrition requirements are food-based and intended for healthy people over age two. The Heart-Check program is not a dietary solution for any particular condition or disease. People with medical conditions or dietary restrictions should follow the advice of their healthcare professionals.