

Creation of nutrition labeling guidelines for restaurants in Tokyo

Groups involved in the restaurant and catering industries, government organizations and other knowledgeable parties were brought together in July of 2002 to form the “Nutrition Labeling Promotion Council” with the aim of creating a healthier eating environment for the citizens of Tokyo.

In order to promote the voluntary introduction of nutrition labeling by restaurants and eateries, the council in March 2003 produced the “Guidelines for Nutrition Labeling at Restaurants in Tokyo”. Since then the member groups in the council have worked together to encourage the use of these guidelines by restaurant operators in Tokyo. Along with the enacting of these guidelines, the “Nutrition Labeling Promotion Joint Declaration” was also issued. This declaration states that the group and individual members of the council will work together to promote nutrition labeling and support better health for the citizens of Tokyo.

Fig. 4 Activities of Nutrition Labeling Promotion Council



Nutrition Labeling Promotion Joint Declaration

We hereby declare that we will promote nutrition labeling based on the “Guidelines for Nutrition Labeling at Restaurants in Tokyo” in order to support the health of the citizens of Tokyo.

- The Nutrition Labeling Promotion Council will convey the importance of promoting nutrition labeling and will aggressively promote to the citizens of Tokyo methods for utilizing such labeling.
- Groups in the restaurant industry will promote nutrition labeling to each of their members.
- Dieticians in Tokyo will support the implementation of nutrition labeling.
- Tokyo and its municipalities will work to support and spread the use of nutrition labeling throughout the entire city.

March 12, 2003
Nutrition Labeling Promotion Council

Member Organizations and Individual

Groups: Japan Food Service Association, Japan Industrial Food Service Association, Japan Meal Replacement Association, Kanto Department Stores Association, Tokyo Food Hygiene Association, Tokyo Western-style Cooking Association, Tokyo Dietetic Association, Shufuren (Housewives' Association)

Individuals: Yukari Takemi (assistant professor, Kagawa Nutrition University), Takashi Kadowaki (professor, University of Tokyo, Graduate School), Mitsuko Nagasawa (The Asahi Shimbun Company, Living Department)

Local Government:

Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Central 23 cities, Municipalities

Guidelines for Nutrition Labeling at Restaurants in Tokyo

Utilization of Nutrition Labeling from Frequently Used Menus to All Menus

1 Definition

The term “nutrition labeling” refers to the provision of nutritional information such as energy and nutritional content on the menu or in a pamphlet or some other written form requested by consumers.

2 Nutritional Component to be Displayed

The nutritional component to be displayed is the energy and nutritional components contained in the Standard Tables of Food Composition in Japan. The common names used in these tables should be applied. The most common requests are for displaying information about energy, sodium and fat.

3 Display Units

The display units should be the same units used in the Standard Tables of Food Consumption in Japan. Along with displaying the fat content, fat energy(※) ratio should also be displayed.

※ This refers to the energy percentage of the overall energy intake that comes from fat.

4 Calculating Nutritional Values

Per person (single-person portion) nutritional values are calculated based on chemical analysis and measurements of the edible portions of raw food materials and in accordance with the Standard Tables of Food Consumption in Japan.

5 Display Methods

Nutritional information should be displayed in a visible and easy-to-understand manner.

6 Accurate Displays

The party making the display is responsible for its accuracy.

The term “restaurant food” refers to both restaurant food and other prepared meals bought outside of the home (boxed lunches, rice balls, cooked dishes).



Let's add nutrition labeling to prepared meals



1 How to Display Nutritional Information

The following method can be used by anyone who wants to add nutrition labeling at their own restaurant.

- (1) Consult with a public health center or other such organization for advice (refer to “Nutrition Labeling Consultation Sites in Tokyo” on page 28)
 - a The Public health center overseeing region where a restaurant is located
 - b The Tokyo Dietetic Association

- (2) Consult with a relevant organization (refer to “Nutrition Labeling Promotion Council Member Organizations” on page 29).

Organizations in which your restaurant is a member will introduce you to the public health center or other such organization mentioned in (1) above.

- (3) Display Independently

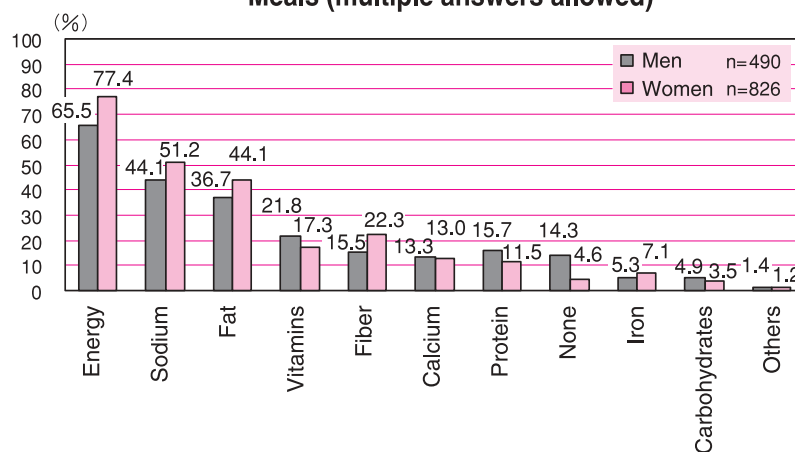
This guidebook explains the procedures for weighing and calculating food materials. So feel free to use this guidebook to try and determine nutrition labeling on your own. However, if you have any problems when making these calculation, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of the organizations mentioned in (1) for advice.

2 Range of nutritional components to be displayed

The main nutritional elements to be considered based on the government’s 1990 “Report on Guidelines for Nutrition Labeling of Restaurant Food” are energy, protein, lipid, carbohydrates (glucide), sodium and calcium.

According to the 2002 survey on restaurant food nutrition labeling conducted by the Nutrition Labeling Promotion Council, the nutritional components that restaurant patrons in Tokyo want to see displayed the most for restaurant food and other prepared meals are energy, sodium and fat, in that order (refer to Fig. 5). Priority should be given to displaying these items as the excessive consumption of such items can lead to lifestyle-related illnesses such as obesity, diabetes, arteriosclerosis and high blood pressure.

Fig. 5 Nutritional Elements Consumers Want Displayed for Restaurant Food and Prepared Meals (multiple answers allowed)



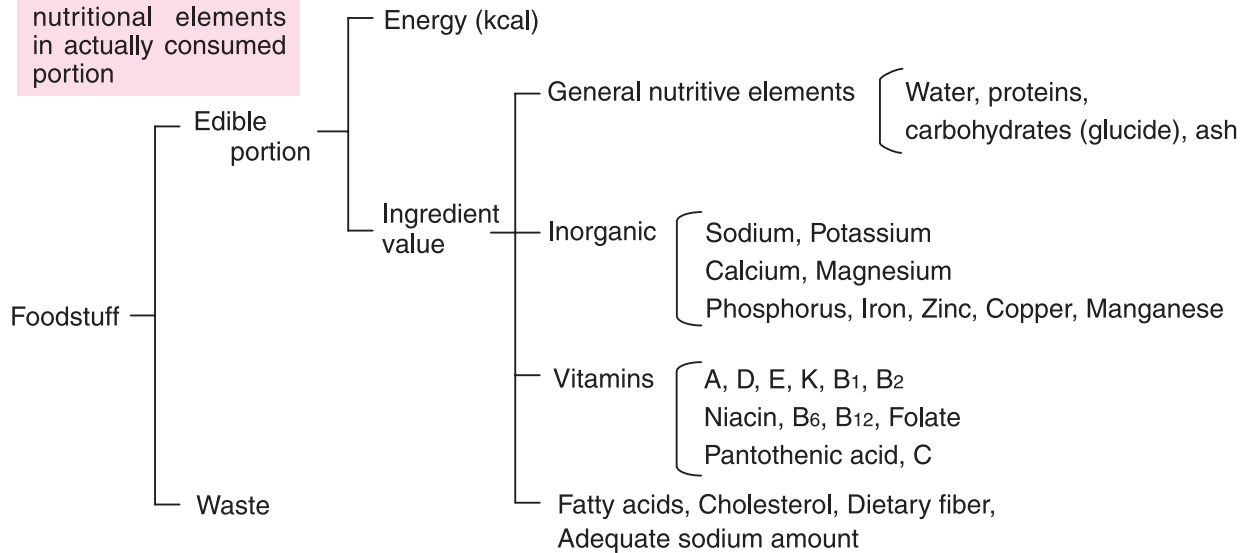
(2002 Survey on Nutrition Labeling Promotion Council)



Main Elements Contained in the Standard Tables of Food Composition in Japan

The term “energy” does not refer to a food element, but is the amount of calories created from the proteins, lipid and carbohydrates (glucide) taken into and used by the human body.

Measured amount of nutritional elements in actually consumed portion



Fish and meat bones, vegetable and fruits skins, stalks and other inedible sections are seen as waste sections (displayed as waste percentage on element table).



Boxed Lunches and Prepared Meals

Be aware that Article 31 “Nutrition Labeling Standards” of the Health Promotion Law (August 2, 2002 Law No. 103) is applicable for nutritional information contained on the packaging or provided in separate document form for boxed lunches and other packaged meals (see page 26).



What is the Standard Tables of Food Composition in Japan?

The Standard Tables of Food Composition in Japan is the basic set of data for foodstuff elements in Japan. Since its introduction in 1950 this table has been revised five times. As of 2004 the most up-to-date table is the “Standard Tables of Food Composition in Japan – Fifth Edition” compiled by the Science and Technology Agency’s Resources Council in November of 2000. This table covers 1,882 food items.

Foodstuffs, whether they are natural foods from plants and animals or processed foods, will have different nutritional values based on environment, processing methods and other factors. However, the food element tables have carefully taken into considered the causes for fluctuating values and so are able to contain standard food element values representing overall national averages for normal food consumption over a full year.