



Health Care Spending Update

Our nation's health care costs are expected to reach \$4 trillion this year — and potentially much higher with the added demands for treating COVID-19. By 2026, the cost will likely reach \$6.19 trillion, consuming nearly 20% of the nation's overall economy. And federal, state and local governments are projected to finance 47% of national health care spending.

What drives the escalating cost of health care? The U.S. system serves a massive population with growing medical needs, especially for chronic diseases and treatments. Some of the major contributors to increased spending include:

- Labor costs for health care professionals; diagnostic and hospital services.
- Cost and administration of workplace-sponsored health plans.
- Use of new pharmaceuticals; more specialty therapies.
- More Medicare and Medicaid recipients.
- More diabetes and obesity cases added to employer coverage.

As a patient, be involved in your medical care options and decisions as much as possible. Good communication between patients and their health care providers is essential to avoiding duplicated and unnecessary care, as well as wasting time and health care resources.

When working with your provider: Ask questions about any prescribed diagnoses and treatments to be sure you understand them, and confirm they are necessary. Always follow your treatment plans, such as taking medications and tracking symptoms.

A sampling of services to question: annual EKGs, bone density screening, MRI scans, and antibiotics. Learn more at choosingwisely.org.

And finally, stay well: Exercise regularly and lose excess weight. Get your daily fruits and vegetables. And relax every day.

Nutrition Facts Label Changes

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

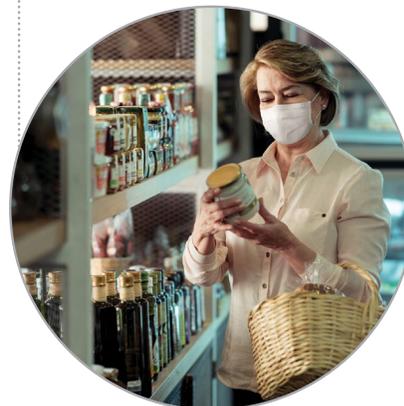
On May 27, 2016, the FDA published final rules on the new Nutrition Facts label for packaged foods, and companies had until January 2020 to comply with the new regulations. Now well into 2020, you're going to see the new label on food packages.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
Total Fat 8g	% Daily Value*
Saturated Fat 1g	10%
Trans Fat 0g	5%
Cholesterol 0mg	
Sodium 160mg	9%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	7%
Dietary Fiber 4g	13%
Total Sugars 12g	14%
Includes 10g Added Sugars	
Protein 3g	20%
Vitamin D 2mcg	
Calcium 260mg	10%
Iron 8mg	20%
Potassium 240mg	45%
	6%

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

The reason for the change was to provide helpful information that allows consumers to make better food choices. While the iconic look of the label remains the same, here are the small changes that you may notice:

- **Increased type size for calories, servings per container and serving size**, so these elements stand out. This ensures you know that the information on the table is for a specified amount of food, and clearly see how many calories there are in that serving size.
- **The addition of added sugars.** Previous labels only listed total sugars, which was a combination of any natural (from fruit or milk) or added (from sugar or syrups) sugars. Nutrition guidelines recommend reducing added sugars, but natural sugar from fruit is fine to consume. It's important to know the difference. Now the Nutrition Facts table will help you understand if the sugar in a product is natural or added.
- **Tables must now list** the amount of vitamin D, iron, calcium and potassium; many Americans need more of these. This is a change from the old labels, which required vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium and iron.



There's also a new footnote at the bottom of the table with a clearer explanation of what Daily Value means. Plus, the Daily Values for fiber, as well as certain nutrients, including sodium and vitamin D, have been updated based on newer scientific evidence.



Managing Stress: Advice for Parents

By Eric Endlich, PhD

In 2020, parents and children alike have experienced extraordinary stress and change. To cope effectively — and serve as a good role model — during this chaotic time:

- Get enough nutritious food, sleep, exercise and relaxation time.
- Establish new routines if old ones no longer work.
- Be patient with yourself and others.
- Limit exposure to negative news or disturbing social media.
- Connect with others in new ways online or in person, if it's safe to do so.
- Find solace in interests such as birding, baking or gardening.
- Get professional help if you feel unable to manage.

When adults are overwhelmed, even young children can tell, and they may react negatively. It's not uncommon to see regression: toileting accidents, separation anxiety, outbursts, struggles over bedtime, excessive worry or crying, irritability or physical complaints.

Talk to your children about their worries and address questions with age-appropriate answers. Explain what is going on and why in an understandable and soothing way. Tell them it's okay to be upset, and share some ideas for coping.

Reassure them you are there to keep them safe. Structure their days with opportunities for learning, movement and fun. Learn more at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

How Much Exercise Do I Need to Get Fit?

Exercising enough to improve fitness isn't as difficult as you might think. Any regular moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity provides some health benefits, the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute notes — especially if you sit a lot at work.

However, to achieve fitness, stick to a plan to increase your exercise over time until you reach these goals from the Department of Health and Human Services Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans:

- **Adults should aim** for 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity or 75 to 150 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity physical activity or an equivalent combination of moderate and intense workout each week.
- **Twice weekly or more,** adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities involving all major muscle groups.
- **Older adults or anyone with chronic conditions,** with their health care provider's approval, should understand what exercise is safe for them and be as physically active as their condition allows.

The CDC notes walking — slow at first and over time increasing speed and distance — is moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity most everyone can do. And, if you need motivation, remember improved fitness can improve sleep, help anxiety and depression and lower the risk for heart disease, diabetes and some cancers.



Dental Care: Beyond Smiles



Good dental health involves more than a bright smile and avoiding cavities. October is **Dental Hygiene Month**, an opportunity to learn how to keep your mouth and teeth healthy and how regular dental care benefits overall health.

Without good oral hygiene, normal bacteria can reach levels causing bad breath, tooth decay and gum disease (periodontitis). And bacteria-caused inflammation also can contribute to serious health problems, including cardiovascular disease, pneumonia and pregnancy complications, the Mayo Clinic points out.

Tips from the CDC for maintaining a healthy mouth and strong teeth:

- Brush teeth thoroughly at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste; floss daily to remove dental plaque.
- Visit your dentist at least once a year for a checkup and professional cleaning.
- Smoking and excess alcohol contribute to gum disease and dry mouth. Limit alcoholic drinks and don't smoke.
- Have any gum disease treated. If you have diabetes, treating gum disease may help lower your blood sugar level.
- Ask your health care provider if you can change any medication causing dry mouth. If dry mouth cannot be avoided, chew sugar-free gum and drink plenty of water.
- See your health care provider or a dentist if you have sudden changes in taste and smell.



Note: Due to production lead time, this issue may not reflect the current COVID-19 situation in some or all regions of the U.S. For the most up-to-date information visit [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov).

The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **Stop Germs Cold**, is at personalbest.com/extras/20V10tools.



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