

# GRAB AND GO LESSON

## Understanding Marketing Claims

### Nutrition and Meal Management

**Purpose:** This handout provides an overview of four commonly used marketing claims on food packages.

Have you ever noticed the different marketing claims that are used on food packages? There are a number of food products with trendy names, claims, and promises. Some help to reveal a nutritious product, while others are often misleading and confusing. Many marketing claims are regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to help consumers when purchasing foods. Knowing some commonly used marketing claims can help you to identify nutritious items and those that require a closer look at the Nutrition Facts label.

### Commonly Used Marketing Claims

*Natural* – This claim is used on packages but can be very misleading. It is often confused with organic. A product can use the claim natural yet can still contain many chemicals and preservatives. The FDA does not regulate this claim, but considers it to mean “that nothing artificial or synthetic (including all color additives regardless of source) has been included in, or has been added to, a food that would not normally be expected to be in that food. In other words, it should be free of artificial and synthetic additives, but it may still contain them.”

*Made with Real Fruit or Contains Real Fruit Juice* – This claim is often used on products with a tiny amount of fruit, and the type may not match the fruit on the label of both snacks and beverages. The FDA does not regulate this claim. The packaging label may indicate that the product is “made with real fruit.” A closer look at the ingredients label might reveal a small amount of pear or other concentrates in making the product. A product can still make the “made with real fruit” claim even if it is a small amount and if it is not the fruit advertised on the package.

*Low-fat and Reduced-fat* – This claim is regulated by the FDA. Low-fat means no more than 3 grams of fat per serving and 30% or less of the total calories per serving are from fat. Reduced-fat means 25% less fat per serving than the regular product. It’s important to note, a product can be labeled as low or reduced-fat and still be high in calories and sodium.

*Multigrain* – Since the FDA does not regulate this claim, it may not mean that a product is healthier than a recipe of a similar product that uses only enriched flour. A bread product may be made entirely of enriched flour with some added sunflower seeds and natural coloring to make it appear a darker wheat. This type of product does not offer the same nutritional benefits as a whole grain.

It is essential to learn about common food marketing claims. This information is key for choosing the most nutritious foods. Remember, a marketing claim does not always provide the best description of the product. Always refer to the Nutrition Facts label and the ingredients statement to identify the most nutritious products. For more information on reading labels, visit this website <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-labeling-nutrition/changes-nutrition-facts-label> for the new and improved Nutrition Facts label.

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#### References

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