



In 2014, Health Canada approved a health claim for flax based on evidence that linked ground (milled) whole flaxseed with reductions in blood cholesterol.

The Canadian Nutrition Facts Label Guidelines for Labelling Ground Whole Flaxseed

Nutrition labelling regulations in Canada require, with a few exemptions, a Nutrition Facts table on prepackaged foods. The Nutrition Facts table for ground whole flaxseed shows a serving amount of 2 Tbsp (30 mL) or 16 g. The Nutrition Facts table has a consistent format and provides information on serving size, calories, % Daily Value (% DV), and 13 core nutrients. Declaration of additional nutrients is optional. The serving size is the basis for the nutrient information shown on the label.

% Daily Value

Health Canada has set reference values, the Daily Value (DV), for reporting nutrients in the Nutrition Facts table. The % Daily Value (% DV) is calculated by determining the ratio between the amount of the nutrient in a serving of food and the DV for the nutrient. The % DV is based on a 2,000 calorie diet and provides a quick overview of a food's nutrient content. As a rule of thumb, a % DV of less than 5% means that the food provides a little of the nutrient, whereas a value greater than 15% means the food provides a lot of the nutrient. For example, 2 TBSP (30 mL) of ground flaxseed is high in fibre (16% DV). Flaxseed does not contain cholesterol, sodium, vitamin A, or vitamin C. This is why the % DV for these nutrients is zero. The %DV can be used to compare two different food products to help make better food choices.

Ground Flaxseed is a Source of Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Ground flaxseed is a source of the essential polyunsaturated omega-3 fatty acid alpha-linolenic acid (ALA). Our bodies cannot make ALA so we must have it in our diet. The Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI) represents reference standards for nutrients that are essential in the human diet (e.g., ALA) or provide a beneficial role in human health (e.g., total fiber). DRI recommendations for ALA from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) are 1.6 g/day for adult men and 1.1 g/day for adult women. The mean DRI for ALA is 1.3 g. One serving of 2 TBSP (30 mL) ground flaxseed provides 3.5 g of ALA, more than twice the DRI for both men and women.

If a food contains 0.3 g (300 mg) or more of omega-3 fatty acid per serving, the label may state "source of omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids", "contains omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids", or "provides omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids". A serving size of 16 g of ground flaxseed contains 3.5 g of ALA per serving, and thus any one of these statements may be included on the label.

Flax is High in Fibre

Flax is a high source of soluble and insoluble fibre. Soluble fibre can lower blood cholesterol and insoluble fibre promotes regularity. The DV used for fiber in the Nutrition Facts table is 25 g. One serving of ground flaxseed provides 4 g, or 16% of the DV. The label of prepackaged flaxseed may state "high source of fibre", "high fibre", or "high in fibre".

Ground Whole Flaxseed Canadian Nutrition Facts Label

Nutrition Facts Valeur nutritive

Per 2 Tbsp (16 g) / par 2 Tbsp (16 g)

Amount Teneur	% Daily Value % valeur quotidienne
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Calories / Calories 70

Fat / Lipides 7 g 11 %

Saturated / saturés 0.5 g

+ Trans / trans 0 g 3 %

Polyunsat / polyinsaturés 4.5 g

Omega-6 / Oméga-6 1 g

Omega-3 / Oméga-3 3.5 g

Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg

Sodium / Sodium 0 mg 0 %

Carbohydrate / Glucides 5 g 2 %

Fibre/ Fibres 4 g 16 %

Sugars/ Sucres 0 g

Protein / Protéines 3 g

Vitamin A / Vitamine A 0 %

Vitamin C / Vitamine C 0 %

Calcium / Calcium 4 %

Iron / Fer 6 %

Ground
(whole)
flaxseed
helps lower
cholesterol.

Cholesterol-Lowering Health Claim for Ground Flaxseed

In 2014, Health Canada approved a health claim linking ground whole flaxseed to blood cholesterol lowering, a major risk factor for heart disease. The “daily amount” referred to in the claim is 5 Tbsp / 75 mL (40 g) of ground (milled) whole flaxseed consumed over three intakes. Therefore, a prepackaged food product that contained 16 g (2 TBSP/30 mL) of ground flaxseed per serving supplies 40% of the daily amount shown to help lower cholesterol.



In addition to this primary statement, the following additional statements may be used:

- Ground (whole) flaxseed helps reduce/lower cholesterol
- High cholesterol is a risk factor for heart disease
- Ground (whole) flaxseed helps reduce/lower cholesterol, (which is) a risk factor for heart disease

The following qualifying criteria apply to all food products carrying the health claim.

The food must:

- contain at least 13 g of ground whole flaxseed per reference amount and per serving of stated size, or per serving of stated size, if the food is ground whole flaxseed, whole flaxseed or a prepackaged meal;
- contain at least 10% of the weighted recommended nutrient intake (WRNI) of a vitamin or mineral nutrient per reference amount and per serving of stated size, or per serving of stated size, if the food is a prepackaged meal;
- contain 100 mg or less of cholesterol per 100 g of food;
- contain 0.5% or less alcohol;
- contain 480 mg or less of sodium per reference amount and per serving of stated size, and per 50 g if the reference amount is 30 g or 30 mL or less, or 960 mg or less of sodium per serving of stated size, if the food is a prepackaged meal;
- meet the conditions for "free of saturated fatty acids" or "low in saturated fatty acids" (Items 18 and 19, respectively, in the table following section B.01.513 of the Food and Drug Regulations).

For More Information

Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Food Labelling and Advertising.

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/labelling/eng/1299879892810/1299879939872>

Health Canada. Summary of Health Canada’s Assessment of a Health Claim about Ground Whole Flaxseed and Blood Cholesterol Lowering.

HealthyFlax.org is the source of information on the health benefits and uses of whole flaxseed, ground flaxseed and flaxseed oil. Our website includes recipes, nutritional evidence, facts and news about flaxseed in all its forms. HealthyFlax.org is supported by Canada's flax growers, processors, food manufacturers and governments. For more information, email us at info@healthyflax.org



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