2.8: Critical Considerations

Part of the health professional’s role is to help clients navigate and understand food nutrition tables. See Table 2.1 about important items to consider.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item to Consider</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider the location of the NFT.</td>
<td>The NFT often appears on the back or side of food packages and may be difficult to find or access. Groups, such as the Dieticians of Canada (2018), are asking Health Canada to move the NFT to the front of package since it is an important factor in how consumers make healthy food choices.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider the meaning of serving size.</td>
<td>The serving size on NFT is not always the recommended quantity of food that a person should eat (Government of Canada, 2019c). The serving size only indicates the amount of food used to calculate the numbers for the NFT (Government of Canada, 2019c). In addition, serving sizes may not be consistent across similar foods, making comparisons difficult. Health Canada is working to make serving sizes on NFT more consistent for easier comparison with alike foods and making them realistically reflect the amount of food that Canadians would typically</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consider what is missing from the NFT.

The NFT does not list all nutrients. For example, there is an effort underway to mandate the inclusion of potassium, calcium, and iron in the NFT because most Canadians do not consume sufficient amounts of these nutrients, which are important to health (Government of Canada, 2017).

Consider who uses NFT.

NFT are useful to make healthier food choices and build an awareness of what is in the food we consume. However, Campos, Doxey, and Hammond (2011) found variability in the use of the NFT in different groups including:

- Higher use of NFT among people who have special dietary requirements due to certain health conditions.
- Higher use of NFT among Caucasian people.
- Lower use of NFT among children, older adults, and those with low socio-economic status.

Table 2.1: NFT items to consider