

LOOK AT THE LABEL!

It's an important day for Sam and Hera. It's their birthday, and their dad is taking them shopping for party food.

Sam and Hera are twins, and they are very much alike. They are both into football, and they love the same kind of music. Sometimes they even dress alike! When it comes to food, Hera can eat whatever she wants, but Sam has to be careful because he has a nut allergy.

For their birthday party, their dad wants to make sure that all the food is nut-free so Sam doesn't have to worry about what he eats on his special day.

"Can we have these chocolate biscuits?" asked Hera. "They look yummy."

"Look at the label," said Dad. "It says they may contain nuts."

"Well, that's silly," said Hera. "Don't they know what they put in their recipe?"

"They probably make the biscuits in a factory that uses nuts for other things," said Sam.

"Well, we'll have to keep looking," said Hera. "Chocolate biscuits are top of my list."

It takes a while, but Sam and Hera finally have a basket of party food they are happy with. They've checked the ingredients lists on all the food and drink, and there's not a nut in sight.

"Good job!" said Dad. "This is going to be a great party."



Become a food detective

As well as a list of ingredients, foods and drinks need to have a Nutritional Panel. That's where you'll find out how much of each nutrient is in a serve and in 100 grams or millilitres of the product. It's important information because it tells you what you're eating and, like the ingredients list, it can help people make healthier food choices and reduce their intake of salt, saturated fat, and sugar.

1. Have you ever thought about what might be in your favourite kind of biscuit? Think about the ingredients you think might be in the recipe. Then check the actual ingredients.

Do you understand what they all are? Choose one, such as "emulsifier" or "raising agent", and find out more about it.

Do all biscuits have this ingredient? Why is it in your favourite biscuit?

2. Most packaged foods have ingredient lists, but some don't need to have Nutritional Panels displayed on the packaging. Why would that be? Find three kinds of food or drink that fit into this group, and explain why. Hint: There are some examples on the Food Safety website: www.mpi.govt.nz/food-safety/food-safety-for-consumers/
3. In the biscuits Sam and Hera chose, the Nutritional Panel says that 100 grams of biscuit contains 22.9 grams of fat and 49.5 grams of sugar. Using your favourite biscuit, find the fat and sugar content in 100 grams and compare that to this biscuit. Share your findings with your family.

