

Healthy vs non healthy food: Nutrient profiling

Nutrient Profiling

- ▶ Nutrient profiling is a scientific method for assessing the nutritional quality of food and beverage items.
- ▶ It can be used by national authorities to promote public health dietary goals.
- ▶ Nutrient profiling is the science of classifying or ranking foods according to their nutritional composition for reasons related to preventing disease and promoting health.
- ▶ Nutrient profiling can be used for various applications, including marketing of foods to children, health and nutrition claims, product labelling logos or symbols, information and education, provision of food to public institutions, and the use of economic tools to orient food consumption.

Nutrient profiling can be used to generate criteria for descriptions of foods falling into two main types:

- ▶ Descriptions that refer to the nutrient levels in foods e.g. ‘high fat’, ‘low fat’, ‘reduced fat’, ‘source of fibre’, ‘high in fat, sugar or salt’, ‘energy dense, nutrient poor’;

or

- ▶ Descriptions that refer directly to the effects of consuming the food on a person’s health e.g. ‘healthy’, ‘healthier option’, ‘less healthy’, ‘good for you’

▶ A common use of nutrient profiling is in the creation of nutritional rating systems to help consumers identify nutritious food

❖ **Nutritional rating systems** are methods of ranking or rating food products or food categories to communicate the nutritional value of food in a simplified manner to a target audience

▶ **Glycemic index**

▶ Glycemic index is a ranking of how quickly food is metabolized into glucose when digested.

▶ Foods are credited for vitamins, minerals, dietary fibre, whole grains, and Omega-3 fatty acids, and debited for saturated fats, trans fats, added sodium (salt) and added sugar.

Basics of the Nutrient Profile Model

1. The model is based on the nutritional value per 100g food;
2. Three categories are used, namely
 - a. **Category 1:** Beverages (excluding milk);
 - b. **Category 2:** Any food other than those included in Category 1 or 3;
 - c. **Category 3:** Cheese, edible oil, edible oil spreads, margarine and butter;
3. The nutrient profiling score must be less than
 - a. For Category 1: 1
 - b. For Category 2: 4
 - c. For Category 3: 28 for a food item to be eligible;

4. Baseline points are calculated based on the cut-points provided for the following nutrients: energy, saturated fat, total sugar, sodium;

5. Modifying points are calculated taking into consideration certain conditions, for example the fruit, vegetable, nut and legume content of the food item, fibre and protein content;

6. Certain condition are also build into the model, for example 'If a food or drink scores 11 or more points for the baseline points, then it cannot score points for protein, unless it also scores the maximum number of points for fruit, vegetables and nuts';

7. Final score = Baseline points - modifying points.

Nutritional information needed to use the Nutrient Profile Model - per 100g food

- ▶ Energy (kJ)
- ▶ Saturated fat (g)
- ▶ Total sugar (g)
- ▶ Sodium (mg)
- ▶ Fruit, vegetable, nut and legume content (as a %)
- ▶ Fiber (g)
- ▶ Protein (g)

Point A

- ▶ A maximum of ten points can be awarded for each nutrient.
- ▶ Total 'A' points = (points for energy) + (points for saturated fat) + (points for sugars) + (points for sodium)

Points	Energy (kJ)	Sat Fat (g)	Total Sugar (g)	Sodium (mg)
0	≤ 335	≤ 1	≤ 4.5	≤ 90
1	>335	>1	>4.5	>90
2	>670	>2	>9	>180
3	>1005	>3	>13.5	>270
4	>1340	>4	>18	>360
5	>1675	>5	>22.5	>450
6	>2010	>6	>27	>540
7	>2345	>7	>31	>630
8	>2680	>8	>36	>720
9	>3015	>9	>40	>810
10	>3350	>10	>45	>900

If a food or drink scores 11 or more 'A' points then it cannot score points for protein unless it also scores 5 points for fruit, veg and nuts.

Point C

- A maximum of five points can be awarded for each nutrient/food component.
- Total 'C' points = (points for fruit, veg & nut content) + (points for fibre [either NSP or AOAC]) + (points for protein)

Points	Fruit, Veg & Nuts (%)	NSP Fibre (g)	AOAC Fibre (g)	Protein (g)
0	≤ 40	≤ 0.7	≤ 0.9	≤ 1.6
1	>40	>0.7	>0.9	>1.6
2	>60	>1.4	>1.9	>3.2
3	-	>2.1	>2.8	>4.8
4	-	>2.8	>3.7	>6.4
5*	>80	>3.5	>4.7	>8.0

*If a food or drink scores 5 points for fruit, veg & nuts the 'A' nutrient cut-off no longer applies

Work out overall score

- If a food scores less than 11 'A' points then the overall score is calculated as follows:

Overall score = (total 'A' points) minus (total 'C' points)

- If a food scores 11 or more 'A' points but scores 5 points for fruit, vegetables and nuts then the overall score is calculated as follows:

Overall score = (total 'A' points) minus (total 'C' points)

- If a food scores 11 or more 'A' points but also scores less than 5 points for fruit, veg and nuts then the overall score is calculated as follows:

Overall score = (total 'A' points) minus (fibre points + fruit, veg and nuts points only) [i.e. not allowed to score points for protein]

A **food** is classified as 'less healthy' where it scores **4 points or more**.

A **drink** is classified as 'less healthy' where it scores **1 point or more**.