

New FDA Labeling

“The recommended daily intake amounts have changed for several nutrients; some have increased and some decreased”

I'm sure you have seen the way the FDA has required new labeling on vitamins A, D, E and folate. I thought it would be good to review some of the changes and provide you handouts that you can use to make conversions quickly. My thanks to Clayton from Biotics Research for making these seemingly complicated changes a little easier to digest.

To give you an overview, the recommended daily intake amounts have changed for several nutrients, some have increased and some decreased. A recommended daily intake value for choline has been added, calories from fat is no longer being required, Sugars is changing to Total Sugars, and a new line for Added Sugars has been introduced. You will see changes on the Nutrition Facts Label for protein powders and food. And you



will see changes on the Supplement Facts Label for supplements. Many of the label changes we won't agree with but we should be aware of them so we can discuss them with our clients. But the big change for most of us is fourfold: vitamin D changes from IU to mcg, vitamin E changes from IU to mg, vitamin A changes from IU to mcg but a new term has been added called RAE which stands for retinol activity equivalent.

Folate is now reported in mcg DFE which stands for dietary folate Equivalents.

Clayton has created several charts to summarize all the changes. Look at Chart A. The first column gives the food or nutrient. The second column gives you the New Recommended Daily Intake for Adults. The third column provides the Old Recommended Daily Intake for Adults as a reference. The fourth column gives the Difference from the Old to

the New Recommendations. In column one, the first category is Fat, you can see the new recommendation is 78 grams, the old recommendation is 65 grams and the difference from the old to the new is 13 grams. The next line Total Carbohydrates changes from 300 grams and is reduced to 275 grams for a reduction of 25 grams. Sadly line 5 provides Added Sugars as 50 grams as a recommended daily intake. You can see Vitamin A changing from 5,000 IU to 900 mcg RAE, vitamin D changing from 400 IU to 20 mcg, vitamin E changing from 30 IU to 15 mg.

Chart B gives the rest of the values. Note the top line folate is transitioned from mcg to mcg DFE. Sadly, B12, Biotin, Pantothenic acid, zinc, selenium, copper, chromium, molybdenum have been reduced. Choline at 550 mg has been added which is great for optimizing brain and liver health. Most of the changes don't affect us directly but the conversions from IU to mcg is a little tricky. And what are Retinal Activity Equivalents and Dietary Folate Equivalents? Let's look at the Unit Changes Chart. By the way, this a chart that you will want to save in a handy spot until your brain switches from IU to mcg. Let's go over each one briefly.

Vitamin A mcg RAE (retinol activity equivalents): There are 2 steps to this conversion. One is to convert IU's to mcg. Then by using the chart, all different forms of vitamin A are converted to retinol activity equivalents. RAE is an attempt to compare apples to apples because all carotene are not converted to useable forms of vitamin A. 1 IU is 0.55 micrograms so 10,000 IU would equal 5,500 mcg. The new daily value is 900 mcg of RAE (retinol activity equivalents).

1 IU is 0.55 micrograms. 1 retinol activity equivalent (mcg RAE) = 1 mcg retinol = 2 mcg supplemental b-carotene = 12 mcg of dietary b-carotene = 24 mcg of other dietary provitamin A carotenoids (a-carotene or b-cryptoxanthin)

Folate, sometimes called vitamin B9 is still measured in mcg but the FDA is now using DFE mcg. DFE stands for Dietary Folate Equivalents. Since there are many different forms of Folate, this label change tries to equate the oxidized form of folate, folic acid to a form the body uses. So 1 mcg DFE is equal to 1 mcg naturally occurring folate and equal to 0.6 mcg folic acid.

Vitamin D mcg is the one we will see the most. 1 IU is equivalent to 0.025 mcg cholecalciferol or ergocalciferol. If we want to give 5,000 IU we multiply the IU in this case 5,000, times 0.025, and we will get the number of mcg, in this case 125 mcg.

Vitamin E mcg 1 IU is equivalent to 0.9 mg d-alpha-tocopherol or 0.67 mg of dl-alpha-tocopherol.

These changes are a little confusing for us but will definitely be confusing for our clients. And of course they will be appreciative if we are ready and willing to guide them through the measurement and definition changes.

Thanks for taking the time to read, don't forget to download the charts and I look forward to being with you again next Tuesday.