



January 6, 1993

Reference Daily Intakes and Daily Reference Values -- Final Rule

One of a Series of FDA Regulations Implementing The Nutrition Labeling and Education Act of 1990

Brief Summary: This regulation establishes reference values for use in nutrition labeling of food. It retains the values established by FDA in 1973 for vitamins and minerals but changes the terms for those values from U.S. Recommended Daily Allowance (U.S.RDA) to Reference Daily Intake (RDI). The regulation also establishes label reference values for eight other nutrients, including fat, cholesterol, and fiber. The values have been established as Daily Reference Values (DRVs). While regulatory requirements make it necessary to distinguish between the two sets of label reference values, to avoid needless confusion, all reference values on food labels will be referred to as Daily Values or DVs.

FDA received more than 1,500 written comments on its proposals published in July 1990 and November 1991 to revise and expand U.S.RDAs to be consistent with the 1989 edition of the Recommended Daily Allowances established by the National Academy of Sciences, and to develop new label reference values for nutrients important to health but for which the Academy had not established RDAs. These comments offered suggestions for changes, but generally supported FDA's efforts to update label reference values for vitamins and minerals and create new values for nutrients of public health importance.

On October 29, 1992, the Dietary Supplement Act of 1992 was signed into law. The act, among other provisions, instructed FDA to not promulgate regulations prior to November 8, 1993 that require the use of, or are based on, RDAs for vitamins and minerals. In effect, the Act required FDA to retain current U.S.RDA values for vitamins and minerals, values that had been developed chiefly by selecting the highest RDA value from among the various sex/age groups listed in RDA tables published in 1968.

Accordingly, this final rule establishes label reference values for 19 vitamins and minerals that are the same as those in existing regulations and that are appropriate for use on foods intended for adults and children four or more years of age. These values, however, will no longer be called U.S.RDAs, but instead will be known as RDIs, a change the Agency agrees is necessary to minimize confusion between RDAs and U.S.RDAs. Since the Dietary Supplement Act did not provide for reference values for infants, children less than four years of age, pregnant women, and lactating women, the preamble to this final rule includes guidance on values that manufacturers may use on labels intended for those groups.

Additionally, the Agency established Daily Reference Values for other nutrients of public health importance which are intended to serve as a point of reference for adults and children four or more years of age. When appropriate, a caloric intake of 2,000 calories per day was used as the basis for these reference values. The nutrients with DRVs are: fat (65 grams), saturated fat (20 grams), cholesterol (300 milligrams), total carbohydrate (300 grams), dietary fiber (25 grams), sodium (2,400 milligrams), potassium (3,500 milligrams), and protein (50 grams).

The provisions of this rule become effective on May 8, 1994.

Docket Number: 90N-0134 "Food Labeling: Reference Daily Intakes and Daily Reference Values"

Code of Federal Regulations Citations: 21 CFR 101.9(c)(7)(iii), (c)(8)(iv), and (c)(9)

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