

[IMAGE]

## Life-Saving Labeling

By Editorial Staff

Does something as simple as including "added sugars" to nutritional labels save lives? According to new research, the answer is a resounding yes, and its benefits go even beyond that.

Researchers evaluated the health and economic impact of the Food and Drug Administration's 2016 mandate that all packaged foods and beverages include the amount of added sugars per serving on their nutritional labeling. To do so, they used data from the 2013-2016 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey to simulate the U.S. adult population ages 20 years and older (235 million adults) and extrapolated the data for nearly 35-year period to evaluate projected health outcomes and health care costs.

Added-sugar labeling was associated with "a reduction of 30,000 new cancer cases, 17,100 cancer deaths, and \$1,600 million [\$1.6 billion] in medical costs among U.S. adults over a lifetime. This policy would generate net savings of \$704 million from a societal perspective and \$1,590 million [\$1.59 billion] from a health care perspective."

nutrition facts - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Why could providing added-sugar information be so profound? One reason may be that over the past several years, consumers have become more educated on the danger of sugar – particularly from non-natural sources; and that fat (certainly unsaturated fat) and carbohydrates (particularly whole-grain carbs) are not the enemy added sugar is when it comes to our health. They've also become increasingly aware of how often the food industry adds sugars to their products – even products the average person wouldn't possibly think would require any added sugar. So read labels and use them as I guide to make healthier food choices; it could be a life saver.

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