**N-20: Comparing Nutrient Densities**

**Nutrient Density** refers to the amount of nutrients in a food, compared to its Calories. The healthiest foods are “nutrient dense” and have the most nutrients for the least amount of Calories. “Junk food” is the opposite, having a lot of Calories with very little nutrients.

**Step 1: CHOOSE** at least 2 nutrition labels to compare. *Choose items that make sense to be compared (different drinks,*

*different snacks, different meats). For example, comparing white bread vs. wheat bread makes more sense than*

*orange juice vs. chicken. You could also compare possible snack foods like Chips vs. Apples.*

**Step 2: EXPLAIN** why you chose these items to compare, what you think the result will be, and why you think that.

**Step 3: COPY** the nutrition facts into a chart (for 2 items, you will need 5 columns)

The first column will have the Nutrition Fact categories (Serving size, Calories, Carbohydrates, Vitamins, etc.)

Ignore any nutrients that have zero’s for all items (e.g. if all items have 0% Vitamin C listed, you can ignore it)

Enter in the numbers (with units!) for your items into the chart’s second and third columns.

**Step 4: CALCULATE** the number of servings to get 1,000 Calories. In order to fairly compare nutrient density, you will

want to compare the nutrients found in an equal amount of Calories. (Show your work!)

(# of Calories / 1 serving) = (1,000 Calories / ***X*** servings)

**Step 5: MULTIPLY** each of the amounts of nutrients by **X** and write the answers on your chart’s fourth and fifth columns.

(*If you multiply* ***X*** *by Calories and get a number that isn’t close to 1,000 Calories, you did something wrong*).

**Step 6: COMPARE** the nutrient contents of the two foods (based on 1,000 Calories).

Consider the following:

* Most people need to eat foods with **LESS** saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, and sugar
* Most people need to eat foods with **MORE** fiber and a greater variety of nutrients (including vitamins/minerals)
* Foods with carbs + proteins + fats (e.g. peanut M&M’s) make you feel full longer and keep your energy level more stable than foods with just carbs (e.g. fruit, chips, candy).

**Step 7: WRITE** a paragraphusing **Claim/Evidence/Reasoning:**

**Claim** (*Topic Sentence*): Make a specific statement about which of your chosen foods is healthier.

**Evidence 1** (*Concrete Details*): Describe a specific difference between your chosen foods that supports the claim.

**Reasoning 2** (*Commentary*): Explain how the evidence supports the claim. That is, you must explain why the

nutrient you used as evidence is healthier or unhealthier.

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| --- | --- |
| **Evidence 2**  **Reasoning 2**  **Evidence 3**  **Reasoning 3** | *Write about 2 more differences and explain how they each support the claim. It’s okay if there are good and bad things about both foods you’re comparing, as long as you can explain your decisions.* |

**Conclusion** (*Concluding statement*): Restate your claim, pointing out how you decided that one was healthier

than the other, overall. Also, explain the real world application of your findings. That is, what should

people do or think, now that you’ve convinced them of your claim?

**Step 8: REFLECT** on your experience.

* Was your guess accurate (explain)? Did anything surprise you?
* Does this information affect your food choices at all (explain)?
* What did you learn when doing this assignment?
* What new thoughts or questions do you have now?