

# NOT ALL CALORIES ARE EQUAL: UNDERSTAND THE NUTRITION FACTS LABEL BY INTELLIGIBLE UNITS

**Nuoya Chen**

Hong Kong Polytechnic University

**Huixin Deng**

Royal Holloway, University of London

**Jinfeng (Jenny) Jiao**

Amazon

**Xiucheng Fan**

Fudan University

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## **Abstract:**

Referencing to Nutrition Facts label is one of the simplest ways for individuals to make healthier food choices. Across five studies, this research examines the intelligible unit effect: interpreting nutrition numbers with easily understood and relevant units (e.g., “A bottle of juice contains 51 grams of sugar, which is equal to the sugar content of 12 sugar cubes”) leads to a higher perceived nutrition magnitude than using normal units alone. This effect is mediated by consumers’ mental simulation. This phenomenon is robust regardless of whether the nutritional ingredient is healthy (e.g., Vitamin E) or unhealthy (e.g., sugar, calories). However, the intelligible unit effect diminishes when numbers are presented in contradictory units that are inconsistent with perceived healthiness of nutritional content (e.g., use lemons which seem healthy to explain sugar content which seem unhealthy, “A bottle of juice contains 51 grams of sugar, equivalent to the sugar content of 12 lemons”).

*Keywords: Nutrition Estimation, Nutrition Facts label, Mental Simulation*

*Track: Consumer Behaviour*