



What do I think of 8700?

Pick up most food items and you'll find on the nutrition label this statement "Percentage daily intake are based on an average daily diet of 8700kJ". Looking at what percentage of energy a food provides can be a way to choose suitable "healthy" foods but there is so much more to think about what makes a food nutritious than just the kilo joule (kJ) content .

Who is the average adult?

Firstly, your energy requirements may be vastly different to the "average" 8700kJ. If you are looking to lose weight than I would suggest rather than commencing some extreme low kJ diet that could end up halving your daily food intake (taking with it your good mood and appetite control), try scanning your everyday intake for unnecessary high kJ options. By reducing your daily intake by 2000 to 4000kJ it's possible to lose 0.5 to 1kg/wk of fat mass. There are some great apps like easy diet diary and my fitness pal to help you track your food intake.

High nutrient vs low nutrient

Secondly, it's very easy to fall into the trap of just looking for low kJ foods. The ones that contribute the least to your overall energy intake – that's the easiest and quickest way to lose weight right? Nope. There are so many other important things to consider, which will make your weight management far more successful.

- What nutrients is it giving you? Yes, a healthy snack should be ~500-1000kJ/serve but focus on how much fibre there is (>3g/serve is optimal) or how much calcium (>200-300mg/serve) rather than just how low in fat or kJ it is.
- Will it fill you up till your next main meal or snack? If you choose a snack that is low kJ but also low in everything else (like fibre and protein) there is nothing to keep you going. Rice crackers fit right into this "flavoured air" category. Use your kJ's wisely and go for something more filling, like a slice of raisin toast or 2 Multigrain Ryvitas, same kJ's, but more filling and more nutrients.
- Does it taste great ? If not, WHY are you eating it! Healthy eating should be maintainable and it won't be if you choose foods just because they are "healthy" but taste awful.

So next time you look at a nutrition label don't just look at how low the kJ's are, focus on what the food is providing and how it is going to keep you healthy by providing all the nutrients we need daily. It's a far more positive way to shop!

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