



Healthy Lifestyles

Simplifying nutrition labels

(NC)—As Canadians we're lucky to have one of the most progressive new food labeling systems in the world. It ensures that robust, accurate information is included on the labels of all packaged food products sold in this country. This is great news for Canadians, as accurate labeling makes it easier to assess nutrition value and compare brands.

During your next trip to the grocery store, look for the Nutrition Facts panel printed on the side or back of the package. It provides information on the amount of calories and 13 common nutrients per serving size. The following basic steps can help you better understand these panels and make more informed choices about the foods you buy:

1. **Serving size.** Serving size is always listed at the top of the panel, shown in both household measurements (1 cup) and metric measurement (grams or litres). It is important to always compare the serving size on the package to the amount that you actually eat.

2. **Calories.** Calories are also always listed at the top of the panel.

The amount of calories outlines the amount of energy in one serving of the food product.

3. **Per cent Daily Value (% Daily Value).** Per cent Daily Value, listed along the right side of the panel, provides information on how much of the recommended daily intake is present in each serving. This ranges from zero to 100 per cent.

• **Eat less...** Choose packaged foods with a low Per cent Daily Value for the following nutrients: fat, cholesterol and sodium. When comparing similar foods based on the same serving size, look for items that are free of trans fat and low in saturated fat. By lowering the amount of these fats in your diet, you lower your risk for heart disease and stroke.

• **Eat more...** Look for products that have high Per cent Daily Values for the following nutrients: fibre, vitamin A and Vitamin C, calcium and iron.

4. **Health Check.** In addition to reading the Nutrition Facts panel, look for the Health Check symbol to help you select healthier products. Health Check is a nutrition education program run by the Heart and Stroke

Foundation of Canada. The Health Check symbol means that the product's nutrition information has been reviewed by the Heart and Stroke Foundation and it has met established nutrition

criteria as a healthy choice.

Clip these tips, create your grocery list, and head out to your local market – and take the guesswork out of dishing up a healthy meal.



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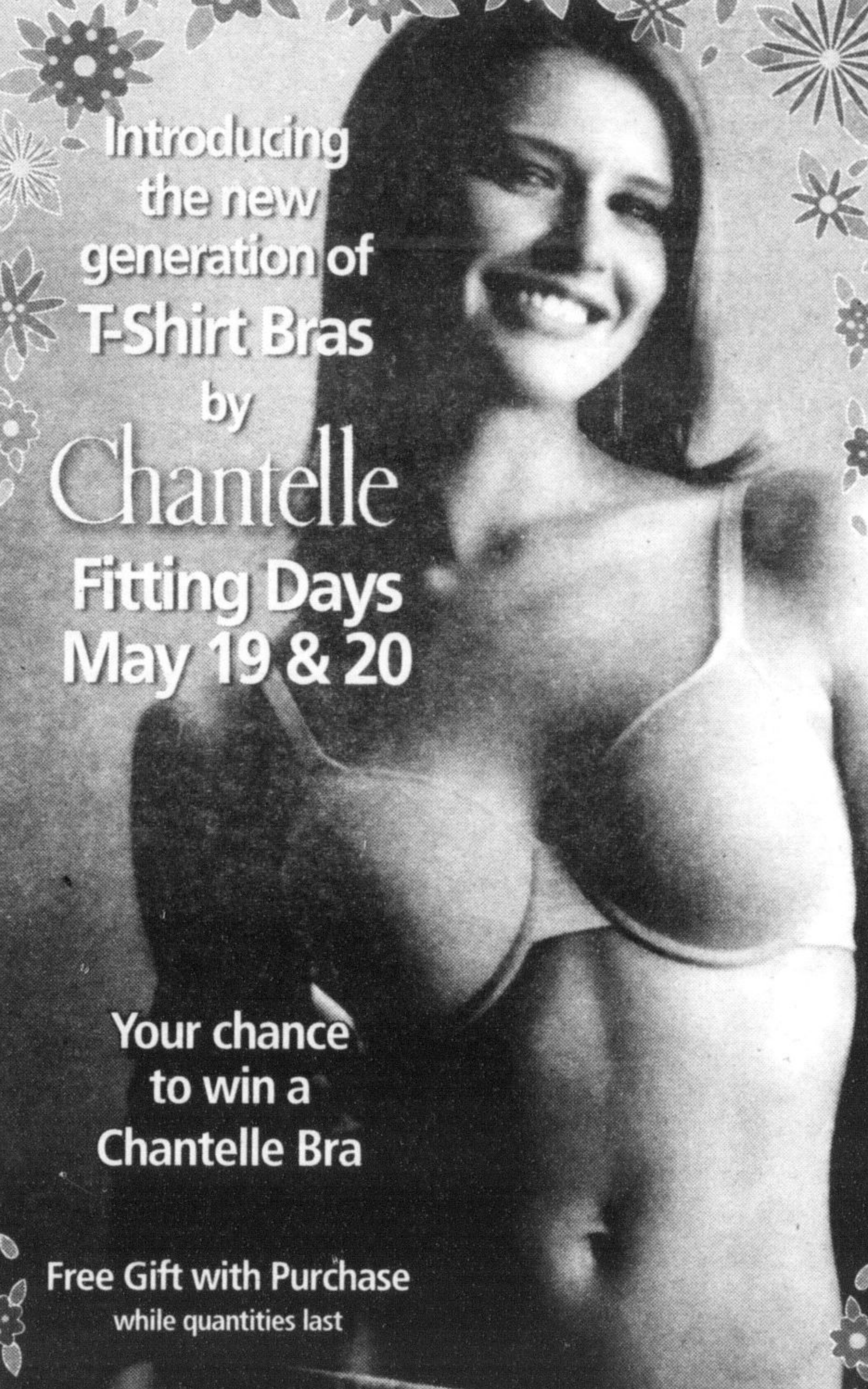
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