



Instant Noodles

Instant Noodles: Not a nutritious choice



The two-minute instant noodles are cheap and tasty and loved by kids. But they are not healthy and contain loads of salt and fat without any valuable nutrients. They are generally made out of whole wheat atta, fortified with vitamins and minerals or may have added vegetables. However these aspects fail to give nutritional value to these noodles. Nine popular instant noodles namely **Knorr Soupy Noodles Mast Masala, Maggi Vegetable Atta Noodles Masala, Maggi 2-Minute Noodles Meri Masala, Top Ramen Super Noodles More Masala, Sunfeast Yippee! Noodles Classic Masala, Sunfeast Yippee! Noodles Magic Masala, Reliance Select Instant Noodles Masala, Prima Stella Instant Noodles Fun Masala and Foodles from Horlicks Ala Masala** were tested.

Parameters Tested

All nine popular brands were tested for fat and sodium. Taste test was also done on various criteria like appearance and after taste.

Key Findings

Knorr Soupy Noodles Mast Masala and **Reliance Select Instant Noodles Masala** contained the highest levels of sodium.

Maggi 2-Minute Noodles Meri Masala scored 72% on taste and had the least sodium and fat. It also did not fare badly in taste either.

Sunfeast Yippee! Noodles Magic Masala might be among the top tasting brands but it was the highest in fat-15.68g of fat per 75g serving. It takes up around half of recommended daily allowance (RDA) of visible fat (which is approximately 25-30g) in just one serving.



Foodles from Horlicks Ala Masala had the second lowest sodium content, did well in taste test scoring 74% and also had relatively low fat content.

The most –liked brand for taste was **Knorr Soupy Noodles Mast Masala** but it was with the highest sodium content.

Prima Stella Instant Noodles Fun Masala was the least liked and it had the second highest fat content. Although its packet weight is 75g like Maggi and Sunfeast but is slightly more costly.

Recommendations for Healthy Eating

According to clinical dietician Bina Chedda of Cumbalia Hill Hospital, Mumbai, ideally, instant noodles should not figure in diet at all. She says “Adults usually have these noodles because they do not have time to cook or they have to make them for their children, in which case it becomes a task to cook something different for them. Children love them because of their taste, advertisements and peer pressure. Try to keep consumption to the bare minimum and add vegetables to make them healthier. Eat them only once in 10-15 days.”

Instant noodles are considered as junk food. They contain very little nutritional value instead contain too much fat, sodium and at times MSG (Mono Sodium Glutamate). To make them healthier better to add lots of vegetables. Avoid having them as main meals and do not eat them often. Children below four years of age should not have instant noodles.

Instant noodles are very high in sodium. According to the lab test for sodium levels, the average sodium content of the nine brands comes to around 1,164mg/100g. That is around 3g of salt in 100g of instant noodles. People may have 75g servings, which means 2.25g of salt. The RDA (recommended daily allowance) for salt is about 6g. So almost 40% of day's salt requirement is fulfilled by having one meal of instant noodles alone.

Salts are inherent in food items. For example vegetables contain salt, without adding externally another 1.5g gets subtracted from RDA. Now only 2.25g of permissible salt intake is left for all other meals to cook. That is less than half a teaspoon of salt.

The RDA for fat is 25-30g in daily intake. The average of the fat content in the tested instant noodles comes to around 17.8/100g. For a 75g serving, it would be 13.3g. It comes approximately half the daily requirement of the fat. The remaining unused fat RDA translates to roughly two teaspoons of oil.

Fat and Sodium Content

Brand Name	Fat (g)	Sodium(mg)
Foodles from Horlicks Ala Masala	12.75	679.5
Knorr Soupy Noodles Mast Masala	12.6	1506
Maggi 2-Minute Noodles Meri Masala	11.55	675.75
Maggi Vegetable Atta Noodles Masala	12	831
Prima Stella Instant Noodles Fun Masala	15.23	766.5
Reliance Select Instant Noodles Masala	12.68	1118.25
Sunfeast Yippee! Noodles Classic Masala	14.48	753.75
Sunfeast Yippee! Noodles Magic Masala	15.68	680.25
Top Ramen Super Noodles More Masala	12.75	851.25

Two-minute guide to instant noodles



Test results shows that how much fat and sodium each brand has

Taste Test

10 expert panelists tasted each of the nine instant noodles brands on test. The table below presents the average rating given on a five point scale. The brands were tested on parameters including appearance, smell and texture. The more stars, the better the rating.

	Price (Rs.)	Packet Weight (g)	Appearance	Smell	Texture	Flavour	Aftertaste	Overall	Score %
Knorr Soupy Noodles Mast Masala	12	70	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	82
Reliance Select Instant Noodles Masala	10	80	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	3 stars	3 stars	75
Sunfeast Yippee! Noodles Magic Masala	10	75	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	75
Foodles from Horlicks Ala Masala	70	320	4 stars	4 stars	3 stars	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	74
Maggi 2-Minute Noodles Meri Masala	10	75	3 stars	4 stars	3 stars	4 stars	4 stars	4 stars	72
Sunfeast Yippee! Noodles Classic Masala	10	75	4 stars	3 stars	4 stars	3 stars	3 stars	3 stars	65
Maggi Vegetable Atta Noodles Masala	20	80	3 stars	3 stars	3 stars	3 stars	2 star	3 stars	57
Top Ramen Super Noodles More Masala	10	82.5	3 stars	3 stars	3 Stars	3 stars	3 stars	3 stars	53
Prima Stella Instant Noodles Fun Masala	12	75	2 stars	2 stars	2 stars	1 star	1 star	1 star	36

Source: Right Choice, January 2014