



Eating Right with Less Salt

Salt is the common name for sodium chloride. Most Americans are getting too much sodium from the foods they eat. The sodium in salt plays a role in retaining water,

contributing to high blood pressure. The *Dietary Guidelines* recommends reducing our sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg (milligrams) a day, about the amount of sodium in one teaspoon of salt. The body only needs about 200 mg sodium a day and we generally eat over 3,000 mg a day. Adults with pre-hypertension and hypertension would particularly benefit from further reducing their sodium intake to 1,500 mg per day.

Focus on fresh foods: Many foods in their original form are naturally low in sodium. These include fruits, vegetables, fresh meats, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, milk, yogurt and grains like rice. Include these foods more often in meals and snacks.

Eat processed and prepared foods less often: Highly processed and ready-to-eat foods tend to be higher in sodium. Eat these foods only occasionally or in smaller amounts – especially cheesy foods like pizza; cured meats like bacon, sausage, hot dogs and deli or luncheon meats; and ready-to eat foods like canned chili, ravioli and soups.

Cook more often at home: Enjoy home-prepared foods where you are in control of how much salt is added. Use little or no salt when cooking. Even if package instructions say to add salt to the water before boiling, it is not required. When using canned vegetables with salt added, drain and rinse the vegetables to reduce the amount of salt.

Read food labels: Look for foods labeled “low sodium,” “reduced sodium,” or “no salt added.” Read the Nutrition Facts label and the ingredients list to find packaged and canned



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 1.5g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

Attention Senior Citizens: Have a nutritional question or concern? If you are participating in a senior meal program, you are eligible to have a free consultation with a Registered Dietitian. Call Cornell Cooperative Extension, Schenectady County at 372-1622, ext. 269. Leave a message, if necessary, for dietitian to call you back.



Consumer-centered access for long-term care information, referrals and assessments. For information, call 382-8481, x 1234.

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Use caution with condiments: Foods like soy sauce, ketchup, pickles, olives, salad dressing and seasoning packets are high in sodium. Try low-sodium soy sauce and ketchup. Sprinkle only a small amount from a seasoning packet, not the entire amount.

Allow your taste buds to adjust: Like any change, it can take time for your taste buds to adapt to less salt. Foods lower in sodium may taste differently at first, but over time it's possible to acquire a taste for foods less salty.

Try new flavors: Skip the salt, “sea salt” or “Kosher salt” and try salt-free seasonings such as herbs, spices, garlic, vinegar, black pepper or lemon juice. You can buy “no-salt” or “salt-free” seasoning blends or make your own. Store in a tightly-covered jar. Rub or sprinkle them on food for added flavor.

Try making these salt-free Seasoning Blends:

Mixed herb blend: Mix together ¼ cup dried parsley flakes, 2 Tablespoons dried tarragon and 1 Tablespoon each of dried oregano, dill weed and celery flakes.

Italian blend: Mix together 2 Tablespoons each of dried basil and dried marjoram, 1 Tablespoon each of garlic powder and dried oregano and 2 teaspoons each of thyme, crushed dried rosemary and crushed red pepper.

Mexican blend: Mix together ¼ cup chili powder, 1 Tablespoon each of ground cumin and onion powder, 1 teaspoon each of dried oregano, garlic powder and ground red pepper and ½ teaspoon cinnamon.

Based on information from “Eating Right with Less Salt” —2014 Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



What’s Your Sodium Knowledge?

1. There is a direct relationship between sodium intake and blood pressure. True / False
2. How much sodium does the body need daily? 200 mg 1000 mg 2300 mg none of these
3. Most of the salt people consume is added at the table. True / False
4. Healthy American adults should eat less than 2,300 mg of sodium per day. Do you know the average amount of sodium consumed by most Americans? 1500 mg 2300 mg 3000 mg over 5000 mg
5. Kosher salt and sea salt are low-sodium alternatives to table salt. True / False
6. Some over-the-counter and prescription medicines contain lots of sodium. True / False (From American Heart Assoc.)

Answers: 1. True. Too much sodium in your system causes your body to retain water. 2. 200mg. Your body doesn't need much sodium for daily functions and fluid maintenance. 3. False. About 75% of dietary sodium comes from processed food; salt added at the table accounts for only 6%. 4. Over 3,000 mg. Many prepared foods contain excessive amounts of sodium (salt). 5. False. Chemically, kosher salt and sea salt are the same as table salt – 40 percent sodium. 6. True. Read labels of all over-the-counter drugs such as antacids. Some companies produce low-sodium over-the-counter products. If in doubt, ask your physician or pharmacist if the drug is OK for you.

For more information concerning sodium, heart disease and hypertension go to the American Heart Association at www.heart.org/healthyating.
 To find restaurants in your area that feature lower sodium fare go the “Healthy Dining Finder” at www.healthydiningfinder.com.
 For general information about senior nutrition go to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics at www.eatright.org/resources/for-seniors