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Nutritious Bites

What You Need to Know About Salt

By Mary Grider, Nutrition Educator

Salt. Sodium. Our bodies need it, but it has been determined that 89% of adults are eating too much of it.

If you are healthy and younger than 50, the American Heart Association says you can have 2,300 mg a day. But those over 50 should stick to 1,500 mg. Research has linked an increased consumption of sodium with high blood pressure (which can also increase your risk of stroke, heart disease and kidney problems).

The best way to keep track of your consumption is by measuring and reading labels. Most of the salt we eat is in fast or prepackaged foods, so be sure to read labels or find out the nutritional information that should be posted in restaurants.

Foods to watch out for include cured **meats, cold cuts, soups** and **snack foods**. Many foods have now been labeled as low

salt, but be sure to read the label and see if it fits into your 1,500 mg limit. At home, be sure to put down the salt shaker and look for flavor alternatives.

One of the best ways to decrease your use of salt at home is to flavor your foods with other spices that have little or no sodium.

Salt substitutes are also available as well as sodium-free seasoning blends.

You may also find that adding garlic or onion to savory dishes can make the food seem to taste saltier.

Experiment at home and see what works for you.

Keeping track of your salt shaker at home and reading the labels on packaged foods are two of the best ways to ensure you will not be one of those 89% of adults consuming too much salt.

Recipe of the Month

Slow Cooker Spaghetti Squash (Serves 4)

If you're watching carbohydrates, spaghetti squash is an excellent way to enjoy "pasta." The flesh of this cooked squash pulls up into strands that resemble spaghetti, and the mild flavor mixes well with sauces. You can also enjoy it with a sprinkle of pepper and parmesan cheese as a side dish.

Ingredients

- 2 large spaghetti squash
- 1 ½ cups water
- 1 jar favorite marinara sauce



Directions

1. Prick spaghetti squash several times with a fork or knife tip
2. Place spaghetti squash in large (5-6 quart or larger) slow cooker. Add water and cook on low for 4-6 hours
3. Remove spaghetti squash from slow cooker and allow to cool for 15-30 minutes.
4. Cut spaghetti squash in half; discard seeds.
5. Using a fork, scrape squash flesh into "noodles."
6. Heat your favorite marinara sauce, following package directions, and serve over spaghetti squash "noodles."

Photo courtesy of paleohacks.com

Keep on Moving

Finding the Fun in Exercise

Fall is a wonderful time of year to get moving! The weather is cooling off but not too cold, and it's a great time to remember to find the fun in exercise.

Hiking

A hike can simply be a walk in the woods. It doesn't have to be strenuous, but it gives you a chance to enjoy the stillness of nature. Check out national and state park websites for disability-accessible trails.

Playing Ball

Tossing a ball with your grandchildren helps both you and your family members increase coordination and balance. You can even toss a ball from your chair!

Dancing

Dancing is a great form of exercise, and you can take classes, go to a dance at your senior center, or put music on at home and move.

Monthly Chair Exercise Seated Heel Raises

This exercise strengthens the calves of the lower legs, which is important because these muscles help stabilize your ankles and feet.

Seated toward the edge of a chair with good posture and knees bent, place feet flat on the floor. Raise heels up off the floor, coming up onto the balls of the feet. Hold for 1 second, then release.

Do 2 sets of 10 to 15 repetitions each, resting briefly between sets.

Modification: If you are more advanced, stand behind a chair and hold on lightly for balance. Come up to the balls of your feet to lift the heels up off the floor. Release and repeat as described above.



For more exercises, visit the following link:
<http://www.livewellagewell.info/study/2007/12-ChairExercisesUGA113006.pdf>

Living Better

Friends Helping Friends

Friends and family tend to be who you depend on when you are going through health challenges, stressful situations, or other life issues. Getting support during critical life events can be key to maintaining your overall health. Having a personal support group in place is essential.

When families are not nearby, many people rely on church members, neighbors, or even fellow senior center participants for help. This would be considered an informal support group, which is a group that shares common goals or interests and is not lead by a professional.

Others may find that they need a more structured group for support in specific issues, like dealing with cancer, diabetes, or grief. This would be considered a formal support group, and often these groups are lead by professionals.

Spend some time thinking about who you depend on the most. Perhaps write down their names and phone numbers.

Do others also depend on you for support? Sometimes just being a friend to someone in need can help your own burden feel lighter.

Formal and informal support groups can provide the following:

- connections with others “in the same boat”
- tips and information
- coping tools and a listening ear
- motivation to help you stay on track

No matter whether formal or informal, finding people for support is good for your health!

Medication Manager

Medication Responsibilities

Medications are often necessary but sometimes there can be a risk to taking them. It is important to have a working partnership with your healthcare providers. This involves taking certain responsibilities with your medications, including:

- Tell **all** of your health providers all the medications - prescription, over-the-counter, and supplements - you take along with the dosages and why you take them.
- Make and carry a list of all of these medications.
- Let your provider know if you are not taking the medicine as prescribed and why.
- Use the medication as prescribed (don't cut it in half, take too much or share it with others).
- Use your mind to think positively about your medications...that they are working well and helping you.

Your health will benefit from your being responsible with your medication usage.

Matter of Balance Classes

Jackson County Senior Center
Jefferson, Georgia
Friday's, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
October 20 – December 15, 2017

More workshops are listed on our web site <http://www.negahealthmatters.org/>

Live Strong, Live Long

If you would like to schedule a workshop, please contact Whitney Bignell, wellness coordinator (Phone: 706-542-4067; E-mail web1975@uga.edu)

Upcoming Events

Test Yourself

Examining Your Habits

How am I doing?

1. I currently eat _____ servings of fruits most days of the week (circle one)
a. Less than 1 serving b. 1-2 servings c. 3 or more servings
2. I currently eat _____ servings of vegetables most days of the week (circle one)
a. Less than 1 serving b. 1-2 servings c. 3 or more servings
3. I currently eat _____ servings of whole grain products most days of the week (circle one)
a. Less than 1 serving b. 1-2 servings c. 3 or more servings
4. I currently have _____ servings of milk or other dairy products most days of the week (circle one)
a. Less than 1 serving b. 1-2 servings c. 3 or more servings
5. I limit the amount of sodium or salt I eat (circle one) Yes No
6. I limit how much sugar or sweet foods I eat (circle one) Yes No
7. I engage in fun exercise activities each week (circle one) Yes No
8. I have at least a few friends I can rely on for support (circle one) Yes No
9. I keep my healthcare providers updated about my medications (circle one) Yes No

What do I want to change?

This month, I want to do the following to improve my health and well-being:

On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = low confidence, 10 = high confidence), how confident am I that I can make the change I wrote above? (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Support for this newsletter is also provided by:

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 - Dept. of Health Policy and Management
 - Institute of Gerontology

Questions or Comments? Contact us!

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