

Eating less salt

2000 mg sodium

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Why do I need to eat less salt?

When you have high blood pressure, heart failure, kidney or liver disease you need to eat less salt. Salt can make your body hold water. Extra water can build up in your ankles, lungs or abdomen. This can make your condition worse. Although water pills can help your body get rid of this extra water, they will not be able to keep up if you eat too much salt.

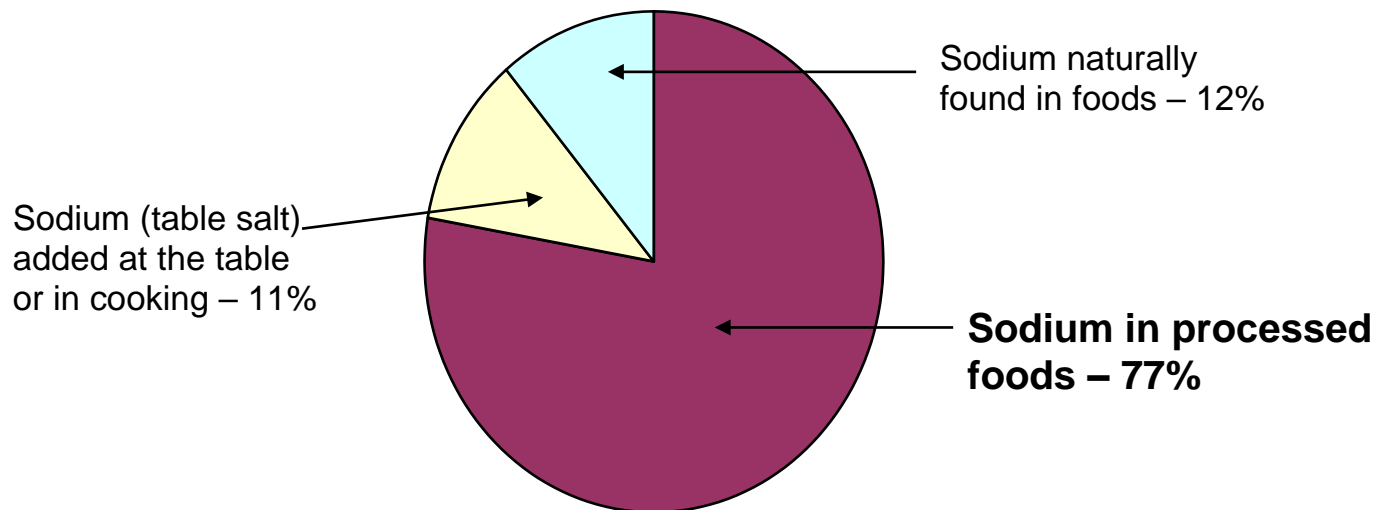
Most people eat more salt than they need. Some foods may be high in salt and not even taste “salty”. This booklet will help you learn how to eat less salt. If you have questions ask your doctor or nurse to refer you to a dietitian.

To help manage your condition, you may also need to drink less fluid. Ask your doctor, nurse or dietitian about the amount of fluid to have daily.

What is the difference between salt and sodium?

Table salt contains a mineral called sodium. It is a source of sodium in our diet.

Sources of sodium in our diet

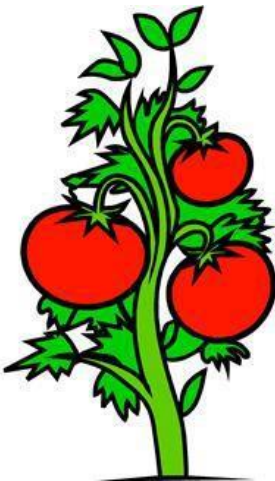


Source: Journal of the American College of Nutrition, 1991.

Most of the sodium in our diet comes from processed foods. Some foods may be high in sodium and not even taste “salty”.

Effect of food processing


Food	Serving Size	Sodium mg
Tomato, fresh, raw	1 medium	11
Tomatoes, canned, whole	½ cup	207
Tomatoes, canned, stewed	½ cup	342
Tomato juice	½ cup	465
Tomato sauce	½ cup	782



Ways to reduce salt and sodium include:

- ✓ Eat fewer processed or convenience foods that are high in salt or sodium:
 - canned soup
 - spaghetti or tomato sauce
 - processed cheese
 - soy sauce
 - pickles and pickled products
 - frozen meals

- ✓ Eat less cured and processed meats:
 - sausage
 - bacon
 - hot dogs
 - deli meats or cold cuts such as bologna, turkey breast, salami or ham

- ✓ Take the salt shaker off the table. Try seasoning your foods with herbs, spices and lemon or lime juice instead. 

- ✓ Do not use table salt or sea salt in cooking or baking.

- ✓ Replace onion, garlic and celery salt with the fresh product or powder.

- ✓ Have restaurant or take out foods less often. You might be aware that pizza, hot dogs and hamburgers are high in sodium. But did you know that “healthier” choices such as stir fries, salads, vegetable soup and sandwiches are often high in sodium too?

Check websites for the sodium content of meals before you eat out.

Sodium content of some restaurant foods

Food	Sodium content per serving
bean burrito	1170 mg
chicken noodle soup	920 mg
chicken nuggets or strips	700 mg
garden salad with light dressing	450 mg to 850 mg
grilled chicken burger	786 mg
large cheeseburger	1170 mg
small hamburger	584 mg
veggie burger	700 mg to 1365 mg

Note: The sodium content may vary at different restaurants. Ask for the nutritional information at each restaurant before making your selection.

Read the food label

Read the food label to help you choose healthier foods.

The Nutrition Facts Table

1. Look at the serving size at the top. Compare this amount to the amount that you eat.
2. Look at the milligrams of sodium. Choose foods with less sodium.

Campbell's Chunky Savory Vegetable Soup

Soup #1

Nutrition Facts	
Per 250 mL (1 cup)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 110	
Fat 1 g	2%
Saturated 0.5 g	
+ Trans 0 g	3%
Cholesterol 10 mg	
Sodium 770 mg	29%
Carbohydrate 22 g	7%
Fibre 4 g	16%
Sugars 6 g	
Protein 3 g	

Campbell's Healthy Request Vegetable Soup

Soup #2

Nutrition Facts	
Per 250 mL (1 cup)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 120	
Fat 1.0 g	1%
Saturated 0.5 g	
+ Trans 0 g	3%
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 410 mg	17%
Carbohydrate 24 g	8%
Fibre 4 g	16%
Sugars 8 g	
Protein 3 g	

Health Valley Organic Vegetable Soup, No Salt Added

Soup #3

Nutrition Facts	
Per 250 mL (1 cup)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 110	
Fat 2.5 g	4%
Saturated 0 g	
+ Trans 0 g	0%
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 75 mg	3%
Carbohydrate 17 g	5%
Fibre 3 g	12%
Sugars 4 g	
Protein 3 g	

Soup #3 has the least amount of sodium (milligram or mg) for each 1 cup (250 ml) serving.

The % Daily Value

The % Daily Value tells you if there is a little or a lot of a nutrient, such as sodium, in one serving. Daily values are based on the recommended amount of nutrients you should get each day.

Daily values are listed on the Nutrition Facts table on a scale from 0% to 100%. As a general guideline, a % Daily Value for sodium of 5% or less is a small amount and 15% or more is a lot.

Nutrition Claim

A Nutrition Claim is used to highlight a key nutrition feature of a food product. It is often put on the front of a package in big, bold type. Here are some claims that can be made in Canada about salt and sodium.

What the label says	What it means
Sodium-free/Salt-free	Less than 5 mg sodium for each serving listed on the package.
Low-sodium	Not more than 140 mg sodium or less for each serving listed on the package.
Reduced-sodium	At least 25% less sodium when compared to the regular product.
Unsalted or No added salt	No salt or sodium is added to the food during processing.

If a product has “sodium or salt-free” or “low-sodium” on the label, it is OK to eat as long as you eat the recommended serving size.



Be careful. Products that have “reduced-sodium”, “unsalted” or “no added salt” on the label can still have too much sodium. You will still need to read the Nutrition Facts table on the label.

How can I improve the flavour of food without adding salt?

Using herbs, spices and other products in your cooking is the answer to improving the natural flavours in food without adding salt.

Meat

Beef	bay leaf, chives, parsley, dry mustard powder, marjoram, thyme, oregano, pepper, garlic, onion, fresh mushrooms, sage, nutmeg
Chicken	green pepper, fresh mushrooms, parsley, chives, poultry seasoning, lemon juice, paprika, sage, thyme, pepper
Pork	applesauce, garlic, onion, pepper, cloves, dill, parsley, sage
Veal	apricot, bay leaf, curry powder, ginger, marjoram, oregano
Lamb	applesauce, garlic, onion, pepper, cloves, dill, parsley, sage
Fish	lemon juice, bay leaf, garlic, dill, parsley, pepper, fresh mushrooms, paprika, curry powder, marjoram

Soups

chives, onion, garlic, chili powder, oregano, thyme, bay leaf, parsley

Vegetables

Corn	green pepper, fresh tomato
Cucumber	chives, dill, garlic, vinegar
Green Beans	dill, lemon juice, marjoram, nutmeg
Tomatoes	basil, marjoram, onion, oregano, onion, parsley
Peas	green pepper, mint, fresh mushrooms
Salads	olive oil and vinegar or lemon juice mixed with dry or Dijon mustard, chives, parsley, garlic, onion, pepper, oregano
Potatoes	green pepper, onion, pepper, chives, parsley, paprika, dill
Rice	chives, green pepper, onion, paprika, parsley

Here is a recipe to use in place of salt:

Herb Shaker Recipe			
½ tsp	basil	1 tbsp	dry mustard
½ tsp	white pepper	1 tsp	thyme
1 tbsp	onion powder	¼ tsp	celery seed
1 tbsp	garlic powder	¼ tsp	rosemary
		½ tsp	paprika
Directions:			
Mix the above into an empty shaker with a few grains of raw rice to allow for easy flow.			

Conversions
¼ tsp = 1 ml
½ tsp = 2 ml
1 tsp = 5 ml
1 tbsp = 15 ml
tsp = teaspoon
tbsp = tablespoon
ml = millilitre

Guidelines to eat less sodium

Food	Say Yes	Say No
Vegetables 4 or more servings a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetables - fresh or frozen • vegetables - canned, no salt added • vegetable juice - low sodium or salt free • mashed potatoes - homemade, without added salt • pasta sauce - homemade, without added salt and allowed vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetables - frozen in a sauce • vegetables - canned • vegetable juice - regular • sauerkraut, pickles, pickled vegetables and others prepared in brine • pasta sauce - commercial • instant potato mixes
Fruit 3 or more servings a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fresh, frozen or canned • all fruit juices 	
Milk and Alternatives 2 to 3 servings a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • milk, soy milk • yogurt • cheese - hard or block (1 ½ ounces or 50 grams a day) • cottage cheese - low sodium or sodium reduced • ricotta cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • buttermilk • processed cheese slices, cheese spreads and sauces • cottage cheese

Food	Say Yes	Say No
<p>Meat and Alternatives</p> <p>2 to 3 servings a day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meat, fish or poultry - fresh or frozen • tuna or salmon - canned, low sodium or rinse well • eggs and unflavoured egg substitutes • peanut butter, regular or unsalted • nuts and seeds, unsalted • legumes such as kidney beans, chick peas and lentils, - dried or canned (rinsed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • smoked, salted, cured or koshered meats such as sausages, hot dogs, bacon, ham, pickled fish, canned meats • deli meats or cold cuts - bologna, turkey breast or ham • pickled eggs • frozen, convenience foods such as lasagna, TV dinners, pizza, hamburgers, french fries or breaded meat, fish or chicken such as chicken fingers • nuts and seeds - salted • baked beans - canned • commercial or store bought pot pies
<p>Soups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • homemade broths and soups without added salt and made with allowed vegetables • commercially canned and dehydrated soups, broths and bouillons with less than 400 mg of sodium per serving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular canned soups, broths or bouillon • some sodium-reduced soups - check the label and avoid if over 400 mg of sodium per serving • regular dry soup mixes, bouillon cubes, powder or concentrated liquid

Food	Say Yes	Say No
Fats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetable oils • sour cream • cream • cream cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • snack dips made with dried soup mixes or processed cheese • commercially prepared sauces, gravies
Grains, Breads and Cereals (6 to 8 servings a day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low sodium breads and rolls • regular breads and rolls (up to 3 servings a day) • muffins, homemade, without added salt • cooked cereals without added salt • unsalted crackers, breadsticks and rice cakes • low-sodium or homemade bread crumbs • rice, barley, quinoa, couscous, bulgur, kasha, millet • spaghetti, macaroni and other pastas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • muffin and bread mixes, packaged • instant hot cereals • pancakes (mixes and frozen) • waffles (mixes and frozen) • bread stuffing, packaged • crackers with salted tops • self-rising flour and biscuit mixes • bread crumbs or cracker crumbs, packaged • rice and pasta mixes, packaged • dry cereals with more than 200 mg sodium per serving such as Cheerios

Food	Say Yes	Say No
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seasonings such as “McCormicks No Salt Added[®], Mrs. Dash[®], PC Blue Menu No Salt Seasoning Blends[®] • salt substitute such as “No Salt[™]” with doctor’s approval • pepper • herbs, spices • vinegar • lemon or lime juice • fresh ground horseradish • unsalted popcorn • tortilla chips, low sodium • carbonated beverages <p>Limit to 1 serving a day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hot pepper sauce (1 tsp) • salsa (2 tbsp) • soy sauce, reduced-sodium (1/2 tsp) • soy sauce, low sodium (1 serving as labelled) • barbecue sauce (1 tbsp) • relish (1 tbsp) • ketchup (1 tbsp) • mustard (1 tbsp) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any seasoning made with salt including garlic salt, celery salt, onion salt, seasoned salt and lemon pepper • sea salt • rock salt • kosher salt • meat tenderizers • meat coating mixes • monosodium glutamate (MSG) • regular soy sauce • teriyaki sauce • steak sauce • Worcestershire sauce • black bean sauce • hoisin sauce • canned gravy and mixes • salted snack foods • olives • artificial fruit flavoured crystals with salt or sodium containing ingredients • instant pudding and cake mixes

Menu Makeover

(how to lower your intake of sodium over a day)

Before	mg sodium	After	mg sodium
Breakfast		Breakfast	
1 package instant oatmeal	255	¾ cup oatmeal, quick cooking	2
2 tbsp natural bran	0	2 tbsp natural bran	0
1 cup milk, 1%	130	1 cup milk, 1%	130
1 slice whole wheat toast	145	1 slice whole wheat toast	145
1 tsp margarine	35	1 tsp margarine	35
1 banana	1	1 banana	1
Lunch		Lunch	
1 cup chicken noodle soup, canned	675	1 cup homemade chicken noodle soup	336
tuna salad sandwich on 2 slices whole wheat bread, 3 oz white tuna with 1 tbsp light mayonnaise	695	tuna salad sandwich on 2 slices whole wheat bread, 3 oz white tuna with 1 tbsp light mayonnaise	695
8 baby carrots	66	8 baby carrots	66
½ cup unsweetened applesauce	3	½ cup unsweetened applesauce	3
Supper		Supper	
3 oz frozen breaded chicken breast	738	3 oz roasted skinless chicken breast, no added salt	46
½ cup mashed potatoes made from flakes and 3 tbsp milk	368	½ cup homemade mashed potatoes with no added salt and 3 tbsp milk	56
3 spears broccoli	29	3 spears broccoli	29
½ cup yellow beans	6	½ cup yellow beans	6
1 slice whole wheat bread	145	1 tsp margarine	35
1 tsp margarine	35	2 oatmeal cookies, store bought	150
2 oatmeal cookies, store bought	150	1 cup milk, 1%	130
1 cup milk, 1%	130	Snack	
Snack		Snack	
½ cup strawberries	1	½ cup strawberries	1
1 cup yogurt	125	1 cup yogurt	125
Sodium	3732 mg	Sodium	2000 mg