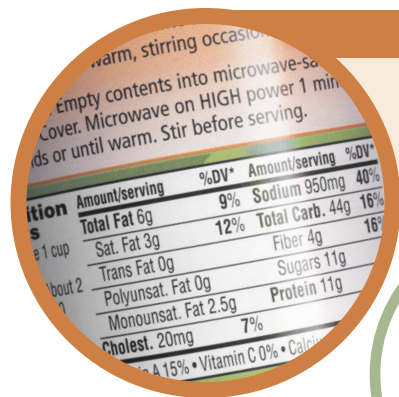


Use Salt Moderately



Requirements to Complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Keep a written record of how much sodium or salt you consume for one day. Record this on your Health Challenge Calendar.
2. Read “Why eat less salt?” and “Tips for eating less salt.”
3. To complete the Challenge, read food labels and choose low-sodium foods for at least 22 days this month.
4. Keep records of your completed Challenge in case your organization requires documentation.

Why eat less salt?

Of the estimated 1 billion people living with hypertension (high blood pressure), about 30% can attribute it to excess salt intake. Salt-related blood pressure elevation accounts for about 14% of strokes and 9% of heart attacks, according to the National High Blood Pressure Education Program Coordinating Committee, which is part of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

Most people living in the United States, the U.K., Canada, and other industrialized countries consume more salt than they need. A recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that most Americans consume more than double the amount of their daily recommended level of sodium – an average intake of 3,400 mg of sodium per day. Japan tops the list, with an average sodium intake of 15,000 mg daily per person. Japan also has a high prevalence of hypertension and the highest percentage of strokes in the industrialized world.



DASH

The landmark Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) study conducted by the National Institutes of Health offered conclusive proof that those who eat a largely plant-based diet rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and low-fat or nonfat dairy products could control and even prevent high blood pressure.

DASH followed 459 people, half women and over half African Americans, all of whom were taking medication for high blood pressure. During the study, participants were taken off their medication and put on a nutritional program based on 2,000 calories a day – primarily whole-grain products, vegetables, and fruits. Small amounts of low-fat or nonfat dairy foods, meat, poultry, fish, and nuts were also allowed. The focus was on foods high in calcium, magnesium, and potassium. Sodium was restricted to 2,400 mg daily.

At the end of the study, the participants had not only reduced their risk of coronary heart disease by 15% and risk of stroke by 27%, but they had also lowered their blood pressure by 10 or more points in the first 2-3 weeks.

DASH-Sodium

Researchers then wondered if lowering sodium intake would make a further difference. In the DASH-Sodium study, 412 people were randomly assigned to eat either a typical U.S. diet or the DASH diet. Participants were also subdivided into groups according to sodium levels: 3,300 mg per day, an intermediate level of 2,400 mg per day (the upper recommended limit), and a lower intake of 1,500 mg daily.

After 30 days, people who ate the least sodium (1,500 mg a day or less) on either the DASH or typical diet had lower blood pressure. People who followed the DASH diet and kept their sodium level low reduced their blood pressure more than those just on the DASH diet or those who only lowered their sodium intake.

Regardless of your eating plan, lower your salt intake. But for best results, eat less sodium *and* follow the DASH diet.



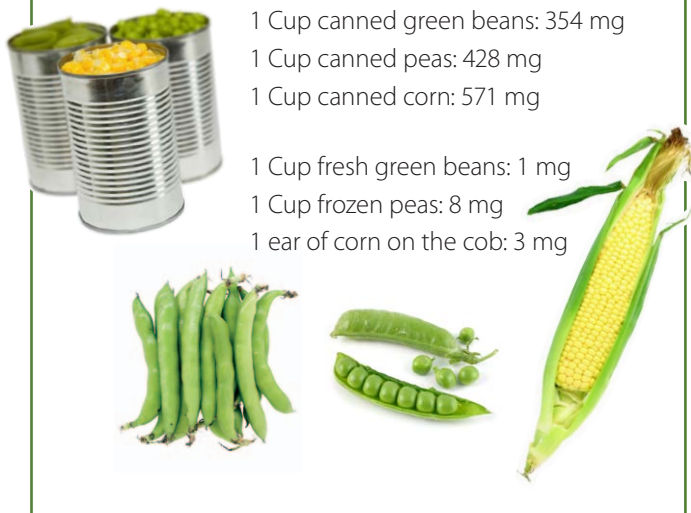
A key to healthy eating is choosing foods lower in salt and sodium.

- Cutting down on salt reduces blood pressure, whether or not your blood pressure is high to start with.
- When your blood pressure goes down, your risk of developing heart disease and stroke goes down too, whatever your age.
- If you have high blood pressure, cutting down on salt can help to lower your blood pressure in weeks.
- You may start to notice a wider range of flavors in food, as your taste buds adjust to having less salt.

The Institute of Medicine recommends healthy 19- to 50-year-olds consume no more than 1,500 mg of sodium daily. According to the CDC, people with high blood pressure, African Americans, and people aged 40 and older should limit their sodium consumption to 1,500 mg. The natural salt content of unprocessed food is about 500 mg per day. Added sodium is not necessary for health.

Where's the sodium?

Only a small amount of sodium occurs naturally in foods. Most is added during processing.



How much sodium is in raw broccoli? What's the sodium content of tomato soup?
Find out here:

www.wellsource.info/wn/USDA-Sodium-Content.pdf

How much is 1,500 mg?

1,500 milligrams (mg) = 2/3 tsp table salt

This amount includes all sodium consumed – restaurant-cooked foods (whether a fine dining establishment or a fast food drive-through), processed foods (e.g., canned soups or packaged pastas), salt used in cooking, and salt added at the table.

More than 70% of a person's salt intake is derived from processed foods, so skipping that sprinkling of salt at dinner is not a sufficient way to completely cut the salt in your diet. Read food labels to determine the sodium content. Choose foods that have less than 100 mg of sodium per serving. It's even better if you choose foods with less than 50 mg of sodium per serving.

You can also use the following list as a guideline to help determine the approximate number of milligrams (mg) of salt in a product:

- **Sodium free** – Contains less than 5 mg of sodium per serving
- **Very low sodium** – 35 mg or less per serving
- **Low sodium** – 140 mg or less per serving
- **Reduced sodium** – Contains at least 25% less sodium than the original product

Learn more about reading nutrition labels at:

www.fda.gov/Food/LabelingNutrition/ConsumerInformation/ucm078889.htm

Fresh is best

Avoid processed foods in the grocery store and head directly to the fresh fruit and vegetable aisle instead. Rather than adding salt to these fresh food items while cooking, season with garlic, herbs, lemon juice, or other seasonings. You can also use LiteSalt™ or another salt substitute, but use it sparingly. (The high potassium in salt substitutes can be unhealthy for some people.)

Buy fresh or frozen vegetables. Also, it is important to limit fast food, which usually has a high salt content.



Tips for eating less salt

The best way to lower sodium in your diet is to start by making a few simple changes:

- Increase your consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, and whole grains.
- Buy fresh, frozen, or canned “with-no-salt-added” vegetables.
- Eat fewer processed foods. This means cutting back on regular commercially prepared frozen dinners, packaged mixes, and canned soups or broths.
- When you eat “convenience” foods, choose ones that are lower in sodium. Cut back on frozen dinners, frozen pizza, packaged mixes, canned soups or broths, and salad dressings. These often have a lot of sodium.
- Use fresh poultry, fish, and lean meat, rather than canned, smoked, or processed types.
- Choose ready-to-eat breakfast cereals that are lower in sodium. Better yet, cook your own oatmeal or wheat cereals. They are much lower in sodium.
- Limit cured foods (such as bacon and ham), foods packed in brine (such as pickles, pickled vegetables, olives, and sauerkraut), and condiments (such as MSG, horseradish, catsup, and barbecue sauce).
- Limit even “lower sodium” versions of soy sauce and teriyaki sauce. Treat these condiments as you do table salt.
- Take the salt shaker off the table!
- Be spicy instead of salty. In cooking and at the table, flavor foods with herbs, spices, lemon, lime, vinegar, or salt-free seasoning blends.
- Cook rice, pasta, and hot cereals without salt. Cut back on instant or flavored rice, pasta, and cereal mixes, which usually have added salt. (If it tastes too flat, just add a little LiteSalt™ or other salt substitute.)
- Rinse canned foods, such as tuna or beans, to remove some sodium.
- When dining out, ask that foods be prepared without added salt, MSG, or salt-containing ingredients. Most restaurants are willing to accommodate this request.
- If you need a snack, choose unsalted pretzels, unsalted nuts mixed with raisins, graham crackers, low-fat and fat-free yogurt, plain popcorn, fruit, and raw vegetables.

Sources:

U.S. Food and Drug Administration. 2009.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2009.

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Canadian Medical Association Journal. 2009;180:263.

American Heart Association. Heart disease and stroke statistics: 2008 update at-a-glance. 2008.

Canadian Journal of Cardiology. 2007;23:437-443.

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2002;288:1882-1888.

New England Journal of Medicine. 2001;344:3-10.



Use less salt.

Get more taste!



The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute recommends spices and herbs to bring out the flavor of foods.

Meat, Poultry, and Fish

Beef	Bay leaf, marjoram, nutmeg, onion, pepper, sage, thyme
Lamb	Curry powder, garlic, rosemary, mint
Pork	Garlic, onion, sage, pepper, oregano
Veal	Bay leaf, curry powder, ginger, marjoram, oregano
Chicken	Ginger, marjoram, oregano, paprika, poultry seasoning, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme
Fish	Curry powder, dill, dry mustard, lemon juice, marjoram, paprika, pepper

Vegetables

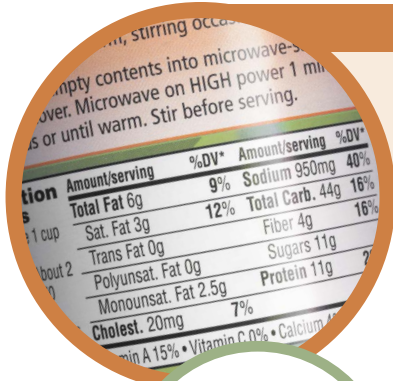
Carrots	Cinnamon, cloves, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage
Corn	Cumin, curry powder, onion, paprika, parsley
Green beans	Dill, curry powder, lemon juice, marjoram, oregano, tarragon, thyme
Greens	Onion, pepper
Peas	Ginger, marjoram, onion, parsley, sage
Potatoes	Dill, garlic, onion, paprika, parsley, sage
Summer squash	Cloves, curry powder, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage
Winter squash	Cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, onion
Tomatoes	Basil, bay leaf, dill, marjoram, onion, oregano, parsley, pepper

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has developed an interactive menu planner to help you eat healthier meals:

<http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/menuplanner/menu.cgi>



Use Salt Moderately



CHALLENGE
Choose
low-sodium
foods.

Instructions

1. Post this record sheet where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the amount of sodium/salt in milligrams (mg) that you consume on one day (as close as you can). Put an "X" in the box on those days that you read food labels and choose low-sodium foods.
3. You must choose low-sodium foods on at least 22 days out of the month to complete the Challenge. Use this calendar to also record weight and any other items you may want to track. Then keep up this healthy practice for a lifetime of best health!
4. Keep this record for evidence of completion.

MONTH:

HC = Health Challenge™ • ex. min. = exercise minutes

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary
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_____ Number of days this month I ate low-sodium meals

_____ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Signature _____ Date _____

