
Tips to Lower Your Sodium Intake

Most people should limit their daily sodium (salt) intake to less than 2300 mg per day from all foods, beverages and seasonings. People with high blood pressure, heart disease, certain liver disorders and chronic kidney disease should further reduce daily sodium intake to 1500 mg per day.

Tips to reduce sodium in your diet include:

1. Cook from scratch. Eat less fast food and pre-packaged foods to avoid added sodium.
2. Remove the salt shaker from your table, use a shaker with smaller holes, or add rice to your shaker so that you use less salt. Taste your food before reaching for the salt shaker.
3. Choose fresh or frozen vegetables. Choose canned vegetables labeled “No Added Salt”. Regular canned vegetables should be drained and rinsed before cooking them in fresh water. Avoid vegetables that are packaged with added sauces and seasonings.
4. Choose fresh or frozen fish, shellfish, poultry and meat more often than meats which have been cured (ham, bacon), processed (sausage, hot dogs, bologna), injected (frozen turkeys and chicken enhanced with solution), and pre-basted or pre-marinated. Use caution in selecting rotisserie chickens since some are injected with sodium filled flavorings.
5. Snack on fresh fruits and vegetables - they are naturally low in sodium.
6. Limit brined and pickled foods such as corned beef and pickled vegetables.



05/2017



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7. Read the 'Nutrition Facts' label on food packages to compare the amount of sodium in processed foods such as packaged mixes, cereals, cheese, breads, soups, salad dressings and sauces. The amount of sodium varies widely! High sodium foods are defined as containing more than 300 mg of sodium per serving.
 8. Instead of using prepared salad dressings, choose oil and vinegar or lemon juice to flavor your salad greens.
 9. Choose foods labeled "low-sodium," "reduced sodium" or "sodium free", or "no added salt" and always check the sodium content. Government standards define a low sodium food as containing less than 140 mg of sodium per serving.
 10. Look for reduced sodium versions of your favorite condiments. Reduced sodium meat tenderizer, steak sauce, soy sauce, salsa, ketchup, and mustard are examples of better alternatives.
 11. Use fresh or salt-free spices and herbs to season your food such as garlic powder, celery seed, dill weed and dried onion flakes. Avoid seasoned salt.
 12. Try fresh lemon juice or lime juice as a replacement for salty sauces and marinades.
 13. Salt substitutes are made with potassium chloride instead of salt. They should not be used by people with chronic kidney disease.
 14. Give your taste buds time to adjust! As you reduce your salt intake you will begin to taste new flavors instead of salt.
 15. When you go out to eat, choose low sodium menu items and ask that your meal be prepared without added salt or MSG.
 16. Ask for gravy, salad dressing, and sauce to be served on the side so you can control how much you consume.