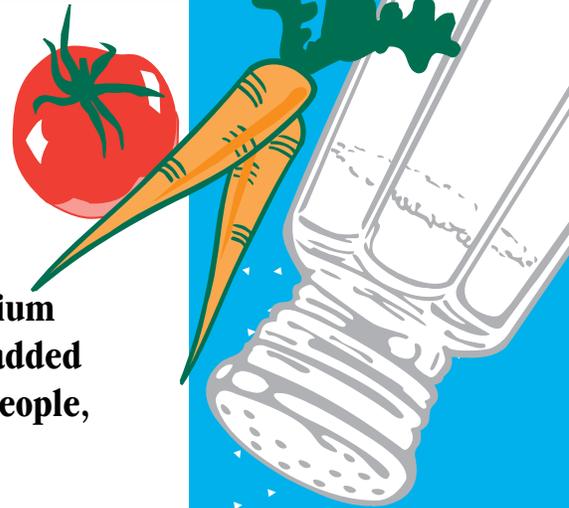


Nutrition for LIFE

Sodium: The Facts



Sodium is a mineral that your body needs. You usually eat sodium as sodium chloride or salt. Salt is found naturally in foods, is added in some processed foods and is added at the table. For some people, high sodium intake leads to high blood pressure.

WHAT SODIUM DOES IN THE BODY

- Helps maintain water balance
- Regulates blood pressure
- Helps muscle and nerves function

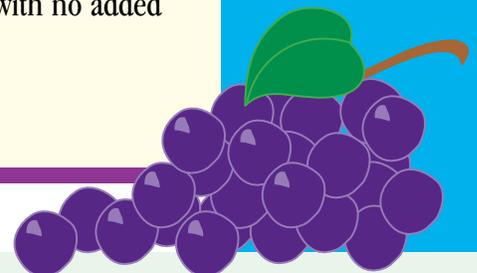


TIPS TO HELP REDUCE YOUR SODIUM INTAKE

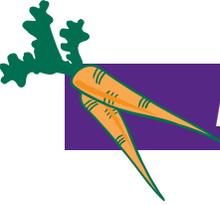
- 1 Read the nutrition facts label for sodium content and choose the product that is lower in sodium.
 - **Sodium-free:** 5 mg or less per serving.
 - **Very low-sodium:** 35 mg or less per serving.
 - **Low-sodium:** 140 mg or less per serving.
 - **Reduced-sodium:** At least 25 percent less sodium than the original version of the product. Some reduced-sodium foods such as chicken broth, canned soups and soy sauce may still contain a large amount of sodium.
 - **No added salt or unsalted:** No salt is added during processing, but this does not guarantee the product is sodium-free. Salt is found naturally in some foods.
- 2 Eat fewer salty snacks like chips, pretzels, and crackers.
- 3 Try to eat less pickled, cured and smoked foods, those made with soy sauce, and foods in broth.
- 4 Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables, and those that are frozen or canned with no added salt.
- 5 Add little or no salt at the table.

RECOMMENDED DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR SODIUM INTAKE

Healthy Americans
need no more
than 2300
milligrams of
sodium per day.
This is the amount
of sodium in
1 teaspoon of salt.



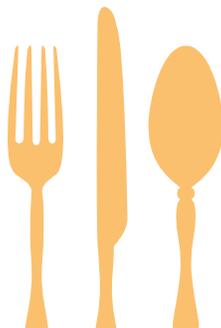
By Beth H. Olson, Ph.D., MSU Extension Nutrition Specialist, Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, 3/09



MEAL PLANNING TIPS

An eating plan that may help lower your blood pressure is the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet.

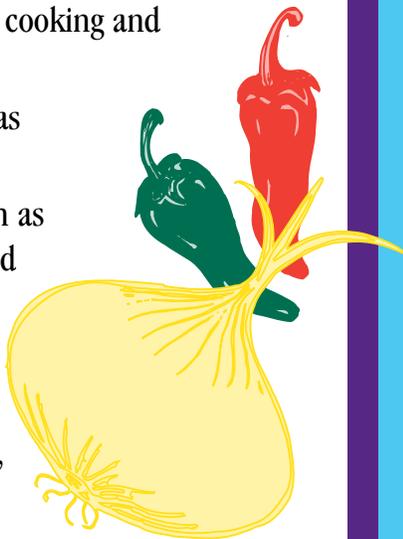
- Eat at least 2 to 3 servings of low-fat dairy products and 8 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables every day.
- Eat foods high in magnesium, calcium and potassium. (See examples of this at the DASH website listed below.)
- Cut down on the total and saturated fat you eat.
- Increase physical activity and watch your weight.



USING SPICES AND HERBS IN PLACE OF SALT

Herbs and spices are a good alternative to salt. Add them to your food slowly because they take some getting used to. Here are a few suggestions:

- Add fresh herbs at the beginning of cooking and dried herbs at the end.
- For Italian dishes, use spices such as garlic, basil and oregano.
- For Mexican dishes, use spices such as chili powder, cumin, red pepper and cinnamon.
- For Asian dishes, try cloves, coriander and turmeric.
- For simple dishes, try black pepper, garlic and onions.



Meal Suggestions

BREAKFAST

- Shredded wheat cereal or regular oatmeal (check label)
- Whole-wheat bread
- Banana
- Fat-free milk
- Unsalted margarine

LUNCH

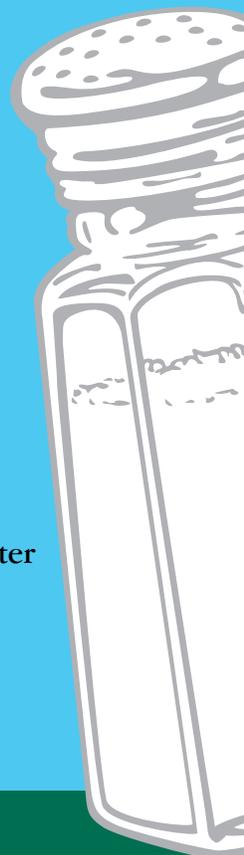
- Turkey breast sandwich on whole-wheat bread
- Add cheddar cheese, lettuce and tomato (choose low-sodium cheese)
- Steamed broccoli
- Medium orange

DINNER

- Spaghetti with low-sodium tomato sauce
- Spinach salad
- Whole-wheat dinner roll
- Unsalted margarine

SNACKS

- Almonds (unsalted)
- Fruit cup
- Dried fruit
- Whole-wheat crackers (unsalted) with peanut butter



FURTHER INFORMATION

American Heart Association

www.americanheart.org

Go to: Healthy Lifestyle, then: Diet and Nutrition, then go to: Nutrition Facts; select SODIUM

Mayo Clinic – Sodium: Are you getting too much?

www.mayoclinic.com/health/sodium/NU00284

