

Low Sodium Diet

Too much sodium in your diet can cause your body to retain excess fluid. This excess fluid can collect in your hands, ankles, belly, and lungs. This is especially important for patients with liver, heart, or kidney disease. Limiting the sodium and salt in your diet is important for good health.

How Much Sodium Should You Have?

For those with liver, heart, or kidney disease, the recommended daily intake of sodium is 2000 milligrams (mg) or less.

Sodium is found in salt. One teaspoon of SALT contains about 2,000-2,400 mg of sodium. That is more than you need in an entire day!

What Do You Look For When Reading Food Labels?

Sodium is found naturally in some foods, and added during processing and production in others. When reading the ingredient list on labels, it is important to look for “salt” as well as “sodium,” and “monosodium glutamate.” The following guidelines have been set by the FDA to help you better understand food labels:

- *"Sodium-Free:"* 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
- *"Unsalted, No Salt Added, Without Added Salt:"* May contain sodium as a natural part of the food, but no additional sodium or salt is added during processing.

How can you reduce the Sodium/Salt in your diet?

- Choose more fresh foods.
- Eat less processed foods.
- Put the salt shaker away! Use herbs and spices to season foods during cooking and at the table.
- Follow the suggestions on the following page to choose foods lower in sodium and salt.

MEATS and MEAT SUBSTITUTES:

Choose: Fresh or frozen un-breaded meats, low sodium or natural peanut butter, unsalted nuts, dried beans, peas, or legumes

Limit: Processed Deli Meats (Pepperoni, Bologna, Salami, Pastrami, Ham, Turkey, Corned Beef), Sausage, Bacon, Hot dogs, Breaded Meats (Chicken Nuggets, Fish Sticks), Canned Meats (Spam), Smoked or Cured Meats

DAIRY

Choose: Milk, Yogurt, Ice Cream, Frozen Yogurt, Low Sodium Cheeses (Swiss, Mozzarella, Grated Parmesan)

Limit: Buttermilk, Processed Cheese Spreads (Cheez Wiz, Easy Cheese), Processed Cheese (Velveeta, American Cheese, Nacho Cheese), Pimento Cheese

VEGETABLES

Choose: Fresh or Frozen Vegetables, Canned Vegetables with no added salt, Low Sodium Vegetable Juices

Limit: Regular Canned Vegetables and Vegetable Juices, Pickles, Relish, Olives, Pepperonici

FRUITS

Choose: All fruits or fruit juices

Limit: No need to limit any fruits or fruit juices

STARCHES

Choose: English Muffins, Bagels, Plain Pasta, Noodles, Rice, Cooked Hot Cereals, Unsalted or Low Sodium Snack Foods (pretzels, crackers)

Limit: Biscuits, Prepared Mixes (pancake, muffins, cornbread), Seasoned rice, noodle, or potato mixes (such as Rice-a-Roni, Macaroni and Cheese), Coating Mixes (seasoned bread crumbs, Shake'n'Bake), Salted Snack Foods (potato chips, corn chips, pretzels, pork rinds, crackers)

FATS

Choose: Plant oils (olive, canola), Tub or Squeeze margarine, Low-Sodium salad dressings

Limit: Bacon, Salt Pork, Fat Back, Commercial salad dressings

SEASONINGS AND CONDIMENTS

Choose: Fresh or Dried Herbs and Spices, Vinegar, Lemon Juice, Onion, Garlic, Pepper, Low-sodium Bouillon, Spice and Herb Table Blends (Mrs. Dash), Low sodium Soy Sauce

Limit: Salt, Bouillon, Potassium-containing salt substitutes, Seasoning Salts, Spice and Herb Mixes with added salt, Commercial Sauces (Teriyaki, Soy), Large Amounts of Ketchup, BBQ Sauce, or Worcestershire

OTHER

Choose: Homemade soups made with low sodium bouillon, Reduced sodium canned soups and tomato sauces, Frozen dinners with less than 600 mg of sodium

Limit: Canned soups, dry soup mixes, Convenience foods (Pizza, pot pies, Hamburger Helper), frozen dinners with more than 600 mg of sodium