

The Shakedown on Salt

What is sodium?

Sodium is an essential mineral and one of four electrolytes needed for regulation of fluid balance in the body, contraction of muscles (including the heart), and the conduction of nerve impulses.

How much sodium do we need in our diet?

9-50 yrs: 1500 mg/day
50-70 yrs: 1300 mg/day
>70 yrs: 1200 mg/day

How much is too much? > 2300 mg/day

10 WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR SODIUM INTAKE:

1. Read food labels: Aim to keep your sodium intake around 1500mg/day; less than 2300 mg/day.
2. Use less packaged & processed foods.
3. Break the habit. Taste your food before adding salt. Remove the salt-shaker from your table and try a "sodium free" herbal blend like McCormick No Salt Added seasonings (Garlic & Herb, Lemon Dill, Italian, etc)
4. Choose fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables without added salt.
5. Choose fresh or frozen fish more often than canned.
6. Snack on fresh fruits and vegetables, which are low in sodium.
7. Take note of the salt content in your favorite condiments: steak sauce, soy sauce, salsa, and ketchup.
8. Use spices and herbs to season your food. Fresh vegetable and citrus juices work great too.
9. Consider using salt substitutes. Caution: People with kidney or other medical problems
10. Limit restaurant eating. When you do eat out:
 - AVOID noodle houses, Chinese, some steak houses, all fast food and pizza places
 - Choose low sodium menu items, stir-fry's and noodle dishes are *highest* in sodium
 - Even salad dressings can have 1500mg sodium
 - Plain grilled meats are lower in salt (grilled salmon, steak, or chicken)
 - Avoid "Cajun" and "Teriyaki "
 - Look on restaurant websites for nutrition information.

Top 5 Worst (High Sodium) Foods:

1. Table Salt. There is 2,325 mg of sodium in 1 teaspoon
2. Soy Sauce: 1 tablespoon has 1,005 mg of sodium
3. Clamato Juice: 880 mg sodium/cup. "The Works" variety has over 1200 mg/cup
4. Frozen pizza, pizza pops, etc
5. Sliced bread, Bagels, Tortilla Wraps, etc can have >200mg sodium per slice/serving