

SODIUM AND YOUR HEALTH

Special points of interest:

- What is sodium?
- How does sodium affect my health?
- Where does sodium hide?
- Healthy tips

THE USDA RECOMMENDS THE AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL CONSUME NO MORE THAN 2,300 MG OF SODIUM PER DAY OR 1 TEASPOON OF TABLE SALT. KEEP READING TO FIND OUT WHY YOU SHOULD LIMIT YOUR INTAKE OF SODIUM AND WHICH ARE THE BEST WAYS TO DO IT.

What is sodium?

Sodium is a common mineral that is important to the human body so that it may function properly. However, too much sodium can be harmful to your health.

Where can you find sodium?

Sodium can be found in:

- Its common form, table salt
- Processed meats such as hot dogs, bacon, canned meat, cold cuts (ham, salami, bologna)
- Canned vegetables
- Other processed and packaged foods such as potato chips, crackers, instant mashed potatoes canned soup
- Condiments and pickled foods
- Fast food

How is sodium harmful to my health?

If sodium is consumed in excess, health implications can ensue. Such implications include:

- Hypertension
- Heart disease
- Kidney disease
- Cerebral hemorrhage (bleeding of the brain)

How can I control how much sodium I consume?

There are many ways to decrease sodium consumption and still be able to enjoy your daily favorites. Just follow these easy tips.

- Avoid adding salt to meals during and after cooking
- Choose low sodium deli meats and cheeses— just tell your deli clerk!
- Look for “low sodium” op-

tions of canned vegetables and beans

- When using canned vegetables or beans, be sure to rinse them under running water before using them to wash away the excess sodium. Frozen vegetables are a great choice too— but choose packages without high sodium sauces.
- Fresh is always best. Buy fresh whenever possible— fresh vegetables, dried beans, whole chicken/ turkey.
- Limit the number of meals away from home. But if you must eat out, ask which “low sodium” options are available.
- Read the label. A serving of food should not exceed 140mg of sodium. Choose products that read “low sodium” or “no added salt” on the package.

Tasty Tips:

These are some great ways to add flavor to your meals without using any additional salt:

- Use fresh or dried herbs and spices such as: Dill, parsley, oregano, basil, garlic, ground pepper, onion.
- Cook with minced ginger, onion or garlic
- Add fresh lemon or lime juice
- Look for salt free seasonings or mixes
- Cook with flavor rich vegetables or fruits such as beets, sweet potatoes raisins, cranberries, etc...
- Use potent spices such as curry, turmeric and cumin