

What is sodium (salt) and why should we eat less?

What is sodium?

Sodium is a mineral found in salt and in many of the foods you eat. Most (about 80%) of the sodium (salt) we eat comes from processed and takeaways foods.

What are the effects of eating too much sodium?

Too much sodium can contribute to:

- Oedema: noticeable swelling in your legs, hands and face
- Heart failure: too much fluid in the blood can overwork your heart making it enlarged and weak
- Shortness of breath: fluid can build up in the lungs, making it difficult to breathe.

Eating less sodium can help reduce your blood pressure, and therefore reduce your risk of heart disease and strokes.

How can you eat less sodium?

Reducing your sodium intake doesn't have to be hard, or reduce the flavour of your food! Try these simple tips to start reducing your sodium intake:

- **Fresh is best**, choose fresh foods over processed foods, packaged foods or takeaways.
- Limit **processed meats** (ham, sausages, bacon, luncheon, and corned beef), **smoked foods** and foods in **brine** (food canned in salty water). These are all very high in sodium.
- Start using less salt in cooking. Try adding $\frac{1}{2}$ the amount of salt called for in recipes until you no longer add salt
- Reading food labels (Nutrition Information Panel) will help you choose the lower sodium option
- Spice up your meals with **herbs and spices** rather than salt.
- **Tomato sauce, chutneys, marinades, soy sauce** and **instant noodles**, also contain a lot of sodium and need to be limited.
- Remove the salt shaker from the table – this will help remove the temptation to sprinkle.
- Snack on fruit and vegetables instead of potato chips and salty crackers.
- **Ask** for food with no added salt at restaurants, cafes and takeaway outlets.

It takes 6-8 weeks for your taste buds to get used to low salt foods, so stick with it and food will actually start to taste better without salt!

Dietitian _____ Date _____ Telephone _____



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FOOD GROUP	BEST CHOICE	AVOID THESE FOODS
<p>Bread, Wraps/Tortilla & Naan/Chappati Limit intake of bread to six slices a day (this is half your daily intake of sodium)</p>	<p>Choose products with less than 400mg sodium per 100g</p>	<p>Cheese bread Ciabata Crumpets Focaccia Garlic bread McKenzie country bread Savoury flavoured breads</p>
<p>Breakfast Cereals</p>	<p>Porridge – rolled oats cooked in water with no salt Hubbard's Toasted Muesli, original Kellogg's Mini-Wheat Blackcurrant, Just Right Original Real Foods Gluten Free Rice Porridge with Orchard Fruits Sanitarium Honey Puffs Weight Watchers Berry Muesli Wheat biscuits (limit to 2 biscuits a day)</p>	<p>Hubbard's Gluten Free Rice Pops, Gluten Free Cornflakes Kellogg's Special K Original, Coco Pops, Cornflakes, Nutrigrain Pam's Nutty Crunch Cornflakes with Honey, Honey Snaps Sanitarium Ricies/Cornflakes</p>
<p>Pasta, Rice & Noodles Do not add any salt, cheese or other high sodium ingredients when cooking</p>	<p>Couscous Dried & fresh plain pasta Egg and Udon noodles Rice and rice noodles (eg vermicelli)</p>	<p>Canned spaghetti Crispy noodles Instant noodles Instant rice & pasta mixes Instant rice risotto</p>
<p>Meat, Fish, Chicken & Meat Alternatives</p>	<p>Fresh meat, fish, chicken, eggs and tofu Dried peas, lentils, beans & split peas No added salt canned salmon Canned Tuna in spring water</p>	<p>Smoked, canned, cured or salted meats and fish (e.g. bacon, corned beef, salami, sausages, sardines, ham, luncheon sausage and meat pies)</p>
<p>Dairy Products</p>	<p>Milk, cream, yoghurt Sour cream, crème fraiche Mascarpone Cottage cheese, ricotta</p>	<p>All other hard and soft cheeses Cheese spread Feta Flavoured cheese Processed cheese (cheese slices)</p>
<p>Fruit & Vegetables</p>	<p>Fresh fruit & vegetables Frozen fruit & vegetables 'No added salt' canned vegetables Salads with no dressing Canned fruit</p>	<p>Coleslaw with dressing Instant potato Regular canned vegetables Pickled vegetables Olives Sauerkraut</p>

FOOD GROUP	BEST CHOICE	AVOID THESE FOODS
Sauces, herbs & spices	Fresh & dried herbs & spices Fresh garlic, ginger, chillies Lemon & lime juice Pepper Onion Vinegar – all types	Salt – all types Salt substitutes e.g. Losalt Seasonings (eg Moroccan) Stock cubes/powders/liquids/gels Pre-packed crushed herbs, ginger, garlic, chilli Wasabi Marinades Soy, oyster and fish sauces Tomato sauce Worcestershire sauce
Beverages	Water Tea and Herbal tea Coffee <i>Limit to 200ml per day:</i> Tonic water or Soda water Fruit juice (might not be suitable if you are diabetic)	Beef tea Bovril/Bonox/Ovriil Tomato juice Vegetable juices
Sandwich Fillings	Leftover fresh meat, fish or chicken No Added Salt salmon (John West Wild Canadian, Sealord, Select) Salad vegetables Jam, honey, marmalade and Nutella No added salt peanut butter	Canned meat Corned beef/silverside Crab meat/surimi Deli meats e.g. ham & luncheon Marmite/Vegemite/Promite Meat and cheese spreads Pate Pastrami, Salami Sausage Smoked and cured meats and fish
Takeaways Hint: ask for no added salt	Burgers (no bacon, cheese or sauces) Fish & chips (ask for no salt) Kebabs/wraps (no cheese or sauces) Rotisserie chicken (no skin, stuffing or seasoning) Sushi (no soy sauce, wasabi, pickled ginger or teriyaki flavoured filling)	All other fast food & takeout such as Chinese, Thai, Indian, KFC, Pizza, McDonalds, Burger King & roast meals
Snacks foods	Plain popcorn, Fruit and vegetable sticks, yoghurt, unsalted nuts, Crackers: Huntley & Palmers Wholegrain Crackers 8 Grain, Real Foods Corn Thins Multigrain and Ryvita Crunch Pumpkin Seeds.	Chips, cup of soup, instant noodles, most crackers, Le Snak, olives, pickled vegetables, bhujia mix, salted nuts and popcorn.