

## Detect sources of sodium:

The majority of sodium in our diets comes from packaged and restaurant food (not the salt shaker) and is a direct result of food processing.

## Connect foods contributing to sodium intake:

Even foods that may not taste salty can be major sources of sodium. Foods with only moderate amounts of sodium, such as bread, can be major sources in our diets because we eat so much of them.

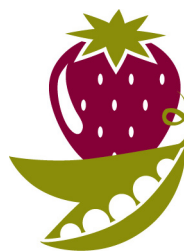
## Control blood pressure by reducing sodium intake:

Research has found that reduced sodium intake can lower blood pressure and control high blood pressure in older adults.

## Things You or the Person Who Purchases and Prepares Your Food Can Do to Reduce Sodium

### At the Grocery Store

- ▶ Read food labels and compare the amount of sodium in different products, then choose the options with the lowest amounts of sodium.
- ▶ When buying prepared meals, look for those with less than 600 milligrams (mg) of sodium per meal.<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ Select fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables with no salt or sauce added.
- ▶ Ask to speak to the registered dietitian (RD) at your local grocery store to learn more about buying lower sodium products. If your grocer doesn't have an RD, ask your doctor for a referral. There may be a fee involved, but an RD can provide valuable guidance on reducing your family's sodium intake and managing blood pressure.
- ▶ Choose packaged foods labeled "low in sodium" or "no salt added" when available.



- ▶ When possible, purchase fresh<sup>2</sup> poultry, fish, pork, and lean meat, rather than cured, salted, smoked, and other processed meats.
- ▶ Ask your grocer if they have a low sodium shopping list available.



### At Home

- ▶ When cooking, use alternatives to replace or reduce the amount of salt you use, such as garlic, onion powder, citrus juice, or salt-free seasonings.
- ▶ Prepare rice, pasta, beans, and meats from their most basic forms (dry and fresh) when possible.
- ▶ Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- ▶ Limit sauces, mixes, and "instant" products, including flavored rice and ready-made pasta.

### Dining Out

- ▶ Ask for nutrition information before you order, then select a lower sodium meal.
- ▶ Ask that no salt be added to your meal.
- ▶ Split a meal with another family member.
- ▶ Keep takeout and fast food—such as burgers, fried chicken, and pizza—to an occasional treat.
- ▶ Order fruit or vegetables with no salt added as a side item.

Remember, you can always add salt to taste with the salt shaker. One study found that when eating foods reduced in sodium, people only add back about 20% of the sodium that was originally in the food when allowed to use the salt shaker freely.

# Savor the Flavor with Less Sodium

# TIPS

## Range of Sodium Content for Selected Foods

Food	Amount	Range of Sodium Content
Breads, all types	1 ounce	95–210 mg
Frozen pizza, plain cheese	4 ounces	450–1,200 mg
Frozen vegetables, all types	1/2 cup	2–160 mg
Salad dressing, regular fat, all types	2 tablespoons	110–505 mg
Salsa	2 tablespoons	150–240 mg
Soup (tomato), reconstituted	8 ounces	700–1,260 mg
Tomato juice	8 ounces (~1 cup)	340–1,040 mg
Potato chips	1 ounce (28.4 grams)	120–180 mg
Tortilla chips	1 ounce (28.4 grams)	105–160 mg
Pretzels	1 ounce (28.4 grams)	290–560 mg

This table was adapted from a 2005 *Toolkit for Health Professionals* aimed toward sodium reduction in older adults on [www.health.gov](http://www.health.gov).

The *2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend that Americans consume less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) of sodium each day as part of a healthy eating pattern.<sup>3</sup>



## Notes

- 600 mg of sodium is the criterion for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s “healthy” label claim.
- Check to see if saline or salt solution has been added—if so, choose another brand.
- The *2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend that Americans consume less than 2,300 mg of sodium each day. For individuals with hypertension or prehypertension, further reduction to 1,500 mg of sodium can result in even greater blood pressure reduction. Ask your doctor if you have any of these conditions.

## References

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture. [What We Eat in America](#). NHANES 2013–2014. Agricultural Research Service Website.

## Learn more at [www.cdc.gov/salt](http://www.cdc.gov/salt)

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## Top 10 Sources of Sodium for People Aged 71+ Years<sup>1</sup>

1. Breads and rolls
2. Cold cuts and cured meats
3. Soups
4. Meat mixed dishes
5. Sandwiches
6. Eggs and omelets
7. Cheese
8. Mashed potatoes
9. Savory snacks
10. Chicken

