

Sodium

Most Americans consume more than 3400 mg of sodium each day.* This consumption is well over the recommended 2300 mg maximum recommended by the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Eating too much sodium puts you at risk for developing medical conditions like high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke. We need some sodium to help our body run smoothly- no more than 2300 mg daily. So where is all this sodium hiding?

Almost every food we eat contains some amount of sodium. Fruits and Vegetables have very small amounts of sodium in them naturally, and some meats, like bacon, can have 260 mg or more mg of sodium. The biggest myth about sodium is that most of the sodium we consume comes from our salt shaker. It does not. It is found in processed foods we buy and restaurant meals. Here is how much sodium can hide in some of our favorite foods:

- One slice of bread can contain 80 to 230 mg of sodium
- A slice of pizza can contain 370-730 mg of sodium
- A soup and sandwich combo at a restaurant can contain up to 2200 mg of sodium

Reading the food labels can help us discover how much sodium is in the foods we eat. Most items we purchase state the amount of sodium found in each serving of that food product. Be aware of the portion size – many food packages allow for multiple portions in the container.

For example, you have a bag of potato chips that contains eight 1 ounce portions. Each portion contains 170 mg of sodium. If you eat half of the bag, you have consumed 680 mg of sodium!

So how can you reduce how much sodium you consume? Use a few of these easy tips to reduce your intake of sodium and increase your health!

- ✓ Use lemon juice or salt-free herb blends to season food
- ✓ Taste food first before using additional salt
- ✓ Do not store the salt shaker on the table. Leave the salt shaker on the counter and get the salt if you really need it.
- ✓ Choose fresh rather than packaged meats. Bacon and ham are high in added sodium
- ✓ Choose fresh fruits and vegetables. Choose frozen vegetables that have been processed without salt and canned vegetables that are processed without salt
- ✓ Compare brands to see which product is lower in sodium
- ✓ Beware of food items that contain lots of salt, but do not taste salty – like pastries and cottage cheese
- ✓ Choose low salt snacks

In restaurants, lower your sodium intake by:

- ✓ Asking for the meal to be prepared without salt
- ✓ Order sauces and dressings on the side to reduce how much you use. (it will be easier to take home leftovers too!)
- ✓ Reduce your portion size. (Take the other half home for a second meal.)
- ✓ Check out nutrition facts on-line before you dine out.
- ✓ Ask if the restaurant serves low sodium options.

*CDC Get the Facts: Sodium and the Dietary Guidelines. www.cdc.gov;



750 E. HWY 24 BUILDING 2, SUITE 100, PO BOX 6956 WOODLAND PARK, CO 80866 (719) 687-3330

