

Low Sodium Diet

Salt is made from sodium and chloride. Sodium controls water balance and maintains your blood pressure. Eating too much salt (sodium) may raise blood pressure. High blood pressure can cause fluid retention, damage to blood vessels, and other health problems.

Limit your sodium intake to **2,300 milligrams or less** per day.

Your provider may suggest a lower level:



1 teaspoon salt
= 2300 milligrams sodium

Do not add extra salt.
Sodium occurs naturally in many foods.

How to Read a Food Label:

Food labels will help you identify low, moderate, and high sodium foods.

Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)

Amount per serving
Calories 230

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g **10%**

Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 160mg **7%**

Total Carbohydrate 37g **13%**

Dietary Fiber 4g **14%**

Total Sugars 12g

Includes 10g Added Sugars **20%**

Protein 3g

1. Check the serving size.

2. Look for the sodium content.

Guidelines to Reduce Sodium:

1. Use reduced sodium or no-salt-added products. For example, choose low- or reduced-sodium cheeses.
2. Cut back on canned foods. If you use canned items, choose low sodium options and rinse to remove some of the sodium.
3. Limit smoked, salted, or cured meats such as bacon, sausage, and ham.
4. Limit pickled and brined foods such as pickles, relish, and olives.
5. Season your foods with spices, herbs, lemon, garlic, ginger, vinegar, and pepper. Remove the salt shaker from the table.

Tips for Eating Out:

1. Ask for your meals to be prepared without, or with less: salt, soy sauce or other salt-containing ingredients.
2. Know the words that indicate high sodium content such as pickled, cured, soy sauce, and broth.
3. Limit condiments such as pickles, soy sauce, hot sauce, and other sauces.

Quick Guide to % Daily Value and Sodium Amount

| | Low | High |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| % Daily Value | 5% or less | 20% or more |
| Sodium | 140 mg or less | 400 mg or more |

How to Choose Lower Sodium Foods

| Choose these Foods: | Limit these Foods: |
|---|--|
| Meats, Poultry, Fish, Legumes, Eggs, and Nuts | |
| Fresh or frozen beef, lamb, pork, fish, poultry, or seafood. For example, lean flank steak, salmon, shrimp, skinless poultry, and eggs. | Cured, salted, and smoked meats, fish, or poultry. For example, bacon, cold cuts, hot dogs, sausages. Fast food restaurants. Breaded meats and frozen dinners. |
| Low sodium canned meats. For example, rinsed and drained canned tuna or chicken. | Regular versions of canned anchovies, chicken, sardines, Spam, and tuna. |
| Unsalted plant-based proteins. For example, dried beans, low sodium peanut butter, unsalted nuts, and tofu. | Plant-based proteins with added salt. For example, canned beans with salt added, regular peanut butter, and salted nuts. |
| Dairy Products | |
| Low fat milk, yogurt, and low sodium versions of mozzarella, ricotta, cheddar, Jack, and Swiss cheeses. | Buttermilk, and regular versions of American, cheddar, cottage, feta, and Jack cheeses. Processed cheese spreads. |
| Breads, Grains, and Cereals | |
| Whole grain: breads, rolls, and tortillas. Check the Nutrition Facts food label to find low sodium options. | Breads and bagels with salted tops. Croutons, pancakes, and waffles. |
| Grains, oats, pasta, rice, quinoa, and other whole grains with no salt added. | Packaged mixes with added flavors. For example, macaroni and cheese, rice pilaf, and stuffing. |
| Low sodium snacks such as unsalted chips, crackers, plain popcorn, and pretzels. | Salted chips, crackers, and popcorn. Pretzels with added salt. |
| Fruits and Vegetables | |
| Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables. Low sodium canned fruits or vegetables, drained and rinsed. | Canned vegetables with salt added. Pickled items such as olives, pickles, and relish. Tater tots. |
| Low sodium vegetable, tomato, and V8 juices. Pasta sauces with no salt added. | Vegetable, tomato, and V8 juices with salt added. Salted pasta sauces. |
| Soups | |
| Low sodium versions of canned, dehydrated, or packaged soup, broth, or bouillon. Homemade soups without salt. | Canned, dehydrated, or packaged soup, broth, or bouillon. Instant ramen. |
| Condiments | |
| Salt-free herb blends, basil, chili powder, garlic, ginger, lemon, onion, pepper, vinegar. Low-sodium sauces and salad dressings. | Barbeque sauce, bottled salad dressings, marinades, salted butter or margarine, soy sauce, and steak sauce. |