

NUTRITION



F A C T S H E E T

Get Smart About Salt

You can reduce your risk of high blood pressure, stroke and heart disease by getting smart about salt. Retrain your taste buds by gradually replacing added salt with herbs and spices. Add health benefits without reducing taste and flavor.

The release of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services sent a strong message: most Americans need to reduce their salt and sodium intake. Adults should consume no more than 2,300 milligrams of sodium per day. That's about one teaspoon of salt. Currently, the average salt intake is about 4,000 milligrams per day—nearly twice the recommended level.

In 2006, the American Medical Association (AMA) issued recommendations to help curb Americans' sodium intake by encouraging food processors and restaurants to reduce sodium levels by 50 percent. The AMA also urged the Food and Drug Administration to review salt and sodium labeling and enhance consumer education.

Health Benefits

Results from a National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute study called DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension), found significant reductions in blood pressure when participants limited their sodium intake. The greatest decline in blood pressure occurred in those consuming 1,500 milligrams of sodium per day. Participants also ate a diet rich in magnesium, potassium, calcium, protein and fiber. The low-fat, low sodium diet included 8 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables, 7 to 8 servings of whole grains, 2 to 3 servings of low-fat dairy foods and up to two 3-ounce servings of lean meat, fish or poultry. An article published in the *New England Journal of*

Medicine estimated this type of diet had the potential to reduce the incidence of coronary heart disease by 15 percent and stroke by 27 percent.

Sources of Added Salt

While some foods naturally contain sodium, most of the sodium we consume is from salt added during processing or preparation. Pre-packaged items and processed food frequently contain salt and sodium for preservation and flavor. Popular high sodium food choices include pickled foods, canned vegetables and soups, snack foods, cured meats, packaged mixes and frozen dinners.

To moderate your sodium intake from processed food, read the Nutrition Facts panel on food packages. Also, look for no added salt or low sodium versions of your favorite foods.

Know the label lingo. Look for:

Sodium Free – a product that contains 5 milligrams or less of sodium per serving

Very Low Sodium – a product that contains 35 milligrams or less of sodium per serving

Low Sodium – a product that contains 140 milligrams or less of sodium per serving

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Reduced Sodium – a product with the usual sodium content reduced by 25 percent

No Added Salt, Unsalted – a product with no salt added during processing; however, the product may still contain sodium

Tips for the Low-Salt Diner

- Celebrate salt-free cooking! Use herbs, spices and salt-free seasoning blends to bring out the best in your dish.
- Use salt shakers only for decoration. The American Heart Association estimates that by setting aside the salt shaker, Americans could reduce salt and sodium intake by 30 percent.
- Indulge in foods naturally low in salt and sodium. Emphasize fruits and vegetables to reduce sodium and gain the many health benefits they offer.
- Keep it fresh! Choose fresh and frozen vegetables (without sauce) more often. Canned vegetables are typically higher in salt and sodium. Look for canned foods with no salt added.
- Drain and rinse canned foods. Reduce the salt content by draining and rinsing canned food items.
- Read food labels. Find Sodium-Free, Very Low Sodium or Low Sodium options. Check the Nutrition Facts panel for sodium content per serving.
- Watch for hidden salt and sodium. Bouillon cubes, meat tenderizers, marinades, soy sauce and steak sauce can be loaded with salt and sodium.

- Enjoy unsalted options such as unsalted nuts and seeds.

Very Low in Sodium, High in Delicious!

SPICY STEAK FRIES

Ingredients:

- 2 large potatoes
- 2 Tbsp. salt-free spicy seasoning blend
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced

Directions:

1. Wash and cut potatoes into wedges, do not peel. Dry potato slices on paper towels.
2. In a large bowl, toss potatoes with spicy seasoning blend, olive oil and garlic.
3. Spray baking sheet with no-stick cooking spray and lay wedges on baking sheet.
4. Place potatoes in preheated 425 F oven and bake for 20 minutes. Turn the potatoes and lightly spray with no-stick cooking spray. Bake another 15 minutes or until wedges are browned and tender.

Serves 4

Nutrition Information per serving:

Calories: 200
Total Fat: 7 grams
Saturated Fat: 1 gram
Unsaturated Fat: 6 grams
Sodium: 10 milligrams

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