

Shocking Salt-tistics

Food group	Range of sodium per serving
Tomato soup	700–1,260 mg
Frozen pizza, plain, cheese	450–1,200 mg
Pretzels, regular flavor, salted	290–560 mg
Salad dressing, regular fat, all types	110–505 mg
Breads, all types	95–210 mg
Frozen vegetables, all types	2–160 mg

Hidden sources of salt

Salt is hidden in foods you might not expect to be salty. And the salt content of similar items can vary widely. Read nutrition and menu labels to compare sodium levels. (Sodium, which is listed on the Nutrition Facts panel, is the component of salt that raises blood pressure.)

Source: Agricultural Research Service Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 17, and recent manufacturers' label data from retail market surveys. Pizza and bread slices vary in size and weight across brands. Note: None of the examples provided were labeled low-sodium products.

What can you do?

Small changes can make a big difference in how much salt you eat. Here are practical steps you and your family can take to reduce your salt intake:

- ▶ Know your recommended limit for daily sodium intake. Most Americans should consume no more than 1,500 milligrams per day.
- ▶ Choose fresh fruits and vegetables and products labeled as “low sodium” or “no salt added.”
- ▶ Read the Nutrition Facts panel on the foods you buy, and choose products that are low in sodium.



- ▶ At restaurants, ask for foods with no or low salt.
- ▶ Talk to your school, worksite, local grocer, and favorite restaurants about providing more lower-sodium options.

Did you know?

- ▶ Eating too much salt increases blood pressure.
- ▶ Most of the salt in your diet comes from foods that might not even taste salty, such as breads, meats, and dairy products.
- ▶ The salt shaker is not the main issue—almost 80% of salt is already in the food you buy, particularly in processed and restaurant foods.

Resources

- CDC Salt Web Site: <http://www.cdc.gov/salt>
- CDC High Blood Pressure Web Site: <http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure>
- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Heart Healthy Cookbook: <http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/healthyeating>