

How much sodium can I have?

A 1,500 to 2,000 milligram (mg) sodium diet is as part of a healthy eating plan and helps to maintain a lower blood pressure and prevent swelling from extra water build up in the body. Your doctor may give you a different sodium goal based on your health history.

What are some hidden sources of sodium?

Sodium is found in:

- Table salt: 1 teaspoon contains 2,300 mg of sodium
- Seasonings: onion salt, garlic salt, seasoning salt, seasoning blends
- Leavening agents: baking powder (488 mg per teaspoon) and baking soda (1,259 mg per teaspoon).
- Additives and preservatives: brine, di-sodium phosphate, monosodium glutamate, sodium erythorbate, sodium benzoate, sodium hydroxide, sodium propionate, sodium sulfite, and sodium nitrite

What are some shopping tips for lowering sodium?

1. Choose fresh or largely unprocessed foods without added salt or sodium-containing preservatives.
2. Read food labels carefully. Look at the serving size and the sodium content per serving. Check out the Reference Table on page 4 to learn more about food labeling definitions.
3. Choose "No Added Salt" or "Low Sodium" canned and frozen foods.
4. Stay away from boxed pasta and rice mixes with seasoning packets since many of them contain over 600 mg sodium per serving.

5. Buy fresh meat instead of processed meat. Avoid "basted" or "self-basted" products which may contain injected broth with salt. Meats marked as "natural" may also contain injected broth with salt.
6. When buying lunch meat, look for "No Salt Added" or "Low Sodium" products.
7. Look for low sodium cheeses, such as Swiss, goat or farmers cheese.
8. All fruit is generally low in sodium. Be aware that dried or canned fruits may be higher in sodium from added sodium benzoate, a preservative.

How else can I cut down on sodium?

- Teach your taste buds to want less sodium by searching for new recipes without added salt. Before you know it, you will like these foods better!
- Try using a pinch of Citric Acid, also known as Sour Salt, as a salt substitute. Citric acid adds a lemony tart taste. Use only a little bit because it will make food taste sour. You can buy Citric Acid in the canning aisle of stores.
- Use a variety of salt-free herbs and spice blends for flavor during meal preparation and at the table.
- Infuse oils and vinegars with herbs to use as a finishing drizzle over prepared foods or use them as a marinade. Try warming olive oil and fresh rosemary in a saucepan over medium heat for one minute. Remove from the heat and pour over sliced tomatoes. Let stand for 20 minutes. Top beans, rice or pasta with the marinated tomatoes.
- Compare food labels at the grocery store, choosing the lowest in sodium.
- Check your local library, bookstore or search the internet for books on low-sodium cooking. One example is the *American Heart Association Low-Salt Cookbook*.
- Many low fat and fat-free foods are higher in sodium, so choose wisely when grocery shopping.

- Look for “unsalted”, “No Added Salt” or “Low Sodium” versions of your favorite foods.
- Use salt-free seasonings to add flavor to foods without the sodium.
- When dining out, ask that your foods are prepared without salt. It is best to check online for restaurant nutrition information before leaving home.
- Check out phone app's for tracking sodium content of individual and restaurant foods.
- Look for frozen dinners with 600 mg sodium or less. This may sound like a lot of sodium, but it may be a better choice than some restaurant meals.
- Medications may contain sodium, such as antacids, laxatives and antibiotics. Ask your pharmacist if you have questions.

What are some ingredients I could use in place of salt?

1. Use the juice of lemons or limes.
2. Add different types of vinegar.
3. Replace garlic and onion salts with garlic and onion powder or use the fresh versions for an even zestier taste.
4. Do not use a salt-substitute containing potassium-chloride unless you check with your doctor or dietitian.
5. Spend time in the spice aisle at the grocery store and you'll be amazed at all of the salt-free seasoning options available. You can also make your own spice blends!

Understanding Food Labeling Terms

This reference table will help you learn the definitions of terms often used on food labels.

Choose These:	Sodium free	One serving contains no more than 5 mg sodium.
	Very low sodium	One serving contains no more than 35 mg sodium.
Check the Sodium Content of These	Low sodium	One serving contains no more than 140 mg of sodium.
	Light or Lite sodium	The sodium content has been reduced by 50% compared to its regular version.
	Reduced or Less sodium	The sodium content has been reduced by 25% as compared to the reference food.
Avoid These	High Sodium	One serving contains 480 mg sodium or more; or 20% Daily Value or more.

Food Groups (Daily Recommended Servings)	Recommended Serving Size	Sodium per serving
Starchy Grain Products (6-11 Servings per day)		
Unsalted cooked cereal, rice, pasta	½ cup	0-5 mg
Ready to eat cereal, low sodium	½ cup	0-140 mg
Bread	1 slice	110-175 mg
Corn tortillas	2 4-inch pieces	5-10mg
Fruit (2-2 ½ cups/day)		
Fresh, frozen or canned	½ cup	0-5 mg
Vegetables (2-2 ½ cups servings per day)		
Fresh or frozen, without added salt	½ cup	1-70 mg
Low Sodium or No Salt Added canned	½ cup	0-140 mg
Low Fat or Skimmed Milk Dairy Products (2 servings per day)		
Milk	1 cup	120 mg
Yogurt	8 ounces	160 mg
Low Sodium Cheese: Swiss, Goat or Farmers Cheese	1 ounce	54-110 mg
Meat, Fish and Poultry (5-7 ounces per day)		
Fresh Meat, Fish or Poultry	3 ounces	30-90 mg
Tuna, No Salt Added	3 ounces	34-45 mg
Nuts and Beans (1 serving per day)		
nuts, unsalted	1/3 cup	0-5 mg
Beans, cooked from dried or frozen without salt	½ cup	0-5 mg

Sample Menu

	Sodium Content
Breakfast	
1% Milk (8 ounces)	127 mg
Shredded Wheat (1 cup)	1 mg
Banana (½ medium)	1 mg
Toasted bread (1 slice)	147 mg
with soft margarine (1 teaspoon) & jam	30 mg
Lunch:	
Pita Pocket Sandwich:	
Pita bread (1/2 slice)	75 mg
Cooked chicken (3/4 cup)	75 mg
Lettuce and tomato slice	5 mg
Swiss cheese (1 ounce)	4 mg
1 medium apple	2 mg
Supper:	
Salmon (3 ounces)	39 mg
Rice with mushrooms (1 cup)	2 mg
Steamed broccoli (3/4 cup)	48 mg
Coleslaw (shredded cabbage) with low sodium vinaigrette	160 mg
1 orange	1 mg
Evening Snack:	
1 Peach	1 mg
Almond butter, unsalted (2 tablespoons)	2 mg
Vanilla yogurt (1/2 cup)	53 mg
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Total Sodium of the Sample Menu	772 mg

*Sodium Values were taken from the USDA National Nutrient Data Base

High Sodium

Serving size →

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size: 57g (About 1/3 cup dry)	
1 cup prepared	
Servings Per Container: About 4	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 180	Calories from Fat 5
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 970mg	40%
Total Carbohydrate 41g	14%
Dietary Fiber 4g	17%
Sugars 2g	
Protein 7g	
Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 6% • Iron 10%	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9	Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Low Sodium

Serving size →

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size: 1/2 cup (54 g)	
(About 1 cup cooked)	
Servings Per Container: about 7	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 190	Calories from Fat 15
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1.5g	2%
Saturated Fat 0 g	0%
Cholesterol 0 mg	0%
Sodium 20 mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 42 g	14%
Dietary Fiber 2 g	8%
Sugars 0 g	
Protein 4 g	
Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 0% • Iron 2%	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9	Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

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