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Share the Wellness Tip

Reduce Salt from Your Diet

A diet too high in sodium may cause the body to retain water, which increases the volume of blood in circulation. This increases the pressure in the arteries. You may be able to help your body by reducing how much salt you eat. Some foods have more sodium than you might think. Be sure to check the label. Look for the American Heart Association's Heart-Check mark — when you see it on a product, you know the food has been certified to meet nutritional criteria for heart-healthy foods.

To reduce your sodium intake:

- ♣ Avoid high-salt foods such as soy sauce, potato chips, chicken broth, pickles, canned foods, bacon, ham, and many convenience and frozen foods.
- ♣ Purchase no- or low-salt products whenever possible.
- ♣ Avoid adding salt at the table.
- ♣ Increase your intake of potassium, which helps flush sodium from the body. Good sources of potassium include: cantaloupe, cooked tomatoes, bananas, baked potatoes, strawberries, and summer squash.

Need more help cutting salt from your diet? Try removing these salty foods or looking for lower sodium choices:

- ♣ **Breads and rolls.** It may not seem like it because a lot of bread doesn't even taste salty, but one piece can have as much as 230 milligrams of sodium.
- ♣ **Cold cuts and cured meats.** Even foods that would otherwise be considered healthy may have high levels of sodium. Deli or pre-packaged turkey can contain as much as 1,050 milligrams of sodium. Look for lower sodium varieties.
- ♣ **Pizza.** One slice can contain up to 760 milligrams of sodium. You may want to choose fewer slices of pizza and opt for more vegetables with less cheese.
- ♣ **Poultry.** Reasonable portions of lean, skinless grilled chicken are great. But when you start serving up the chicken nuggets or poultry injected with added sodium solutions/marinades, the sodium starts adding up. Just 3 ounces of frozen and breaded nuggets can add nearly 600 milligrams of sodium.
- ♣ **Soup.** One cup of canned chicken noodle soup can have up to 940 milligrams of sodium. Look for lower sodium options.
- ♣ **Sandwiches.** This covers everything from grilled cheese to hamburgers. We already know that breads and cured meats are heavy on the sodium. Add them together, and you can pretty easily surpass 1,500 milligrams of sodium in one sitting.

Sources: American Heart Association; National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute



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