

# 10 Easy Tips for Reducing Sodium Consumption

Learning about sodium in foods and exploring new ways to prepare foods can help you achieve your sodium goal. And, if you follow these tips to reduce the amount of sodium you consume, your “taste” for sodium will gradually decrease over time – so eventually, you may not even miss it!

1. **Read the Nutrition Facts: Label** Read the Nutrition Facts Label to see how much sodium is in foods and beverages. Most people should consume less than 100% of the Daily Value (or less than 2,400 mg) of sodium each day. Check the label to compare sodium in different brands of foods and beverages and choose those lower in sodium.
2. **Prepare your own food when you can:** Limit packaged sauces, mixes, and “instant” products (including flavored rice, instant noodles, and ready-made pasta).
3. **Add flavor without adding sodium:** Limit the amount of salt you add to foods when cooking, baking, or at the table. Try no-salt seasoning blends and herbs and spices instead of salt to add flavor to your food.
4. **Buy fresh:** Choose fresh meat, poultry, and seafood, rather than processed varieties. Also, check the package on fresh meat and poultry to see if salt water or saline has been added.
5. **Watch your veggies:** Buy fresh, frozen (no sauce or seasoning), or low sodium or no-salt-added canned vegetables.
6. **Give sodium the “rinse”:** Rinse sodium-containing canned foods, such as beans, tuna, and vegetables before eating. This removes some of the sodium.
7. **“Unsalt” your snacks:** Choose low sodium or no-salt-added nuts, seeds, and snack products (such as chips and pretzels) – or have carrot or celery sticks instead.
8. **Consider your condiments:** Sodium in condiments can add up. Choose light or reduced sodium condiments, add oil and vinegar to salads rather than bottled dressings, and use only a small amount of seasoning from flavoring packets instead of the entire packet.
9. **Reduce your portion size:** Less food means less sodium. Prepare smaller portions at home and consume less when eating out — choose smaller sizes, split an entrée with a friend, or take home part of your meal.
10. **Make lower-sodium choices at restaurants** Ask for your meal to be prepared without salt and request that sauces and salad dressings be served “on the side,” then use less of them. If a restaurant item or meal includes a claim about its nutrient content, such as “low sodium” or “low fat,” then nutrition information to support that claim is required to be available at the point of purchase. In addition, as of May 5, 2017, many chain restaurants (and other places selling restaurant-type food) will be required to provide written information on the nutrient content of standard menu items, including the amount of sodium.