



# Low-Sodium Diet

A low-sodium (salt) diet may help lower blood pressure and prevent build-up of extra water in your body. This diet can help those with high blood pressure, heart failure, kidney disease, or other conditions in which swelling or fluid retention can occur.

Even if you take a pill for blood pressure or a water pill (diuretic) to remove fluid, it is still important to have less salt in your diet.

## Guidelines for Sodium Intake:

Current recommendations are to limit sodium from all sources to **1,500 mg per day**, which is about **300 to 400 mg per meal** and **100 to 200 mg per snack**. Your doctor or dietitian can tell you the specific limit that is right for you.

*Keep in mind that adding just 1/4 teaspoon of table salt to foods – about a “pinch” – uses 600 mg of your daily sodium total.*

Read labels (see example below) to know how much sodium is in your foods. Remember to multiply the amount of sodium by the number of serving sizes you are eating!

## Tips to lower your sodium intake:

- Use herbs, lemon, wine, and vinegar instead of salt to flavor foods
- Avoid processed/packaged foods, canned soups, frozen dinners, and entrees with gravies or sauces (try shopping more around the edge of the grocery store – the inner aisles are where all of the salty processed foods are)
- Try fruits, unsalted nuts, veggie sticks, or other low-sodium snacks in place of high-salt snacks like potato chips, pretzels, or popcorn
- Limit/avoid fast foods that are high in sodium
- Use salt substitutes only on the advice of your physician. In certain medical conditions, these might be harmful
- Balance eating a higher sodium food by eating low-sodium foods for the next few meals and increasing your intake of fruits and vegetables
- Look out for sources of sodium added to food in other forms, such as MSG, baking soda/powder, and preservatives such as sodium benzoate.

Compare the food labels of these two versions of canned tomatoes. The regular canned tomatoes (right) have 15 times as much sodium as the low-sodium canned tomatoes.

Low-Sodium Canned Diced Tomatoes

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (130g)	
Servings Per Container 3 1/2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 25	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
<b>Sodium 10mg</b>	<b>1%</b>
Potassium 270mg	8%
Total Carbohydrate 5g	2%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugar 3g	
Protein 1g	
Vitamin A 5%	Vitamin C 30%
Calcium 4%	Iron 4%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.	

Canned Diced Tomatoes

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (130g)	
Servings Per Container 3 1/2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 25	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
<b>Sodium 150mg</b>	<b>6%</b>
Potassium 230mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 5g	2%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugar 3g	
Protein 1g	
Vitamin A 5%	Vitamin C 20%
Calcium 4%	Iron 6%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.	

# Salt in Diet

Use this table to help you choose foods that fit in to your daily sodium recommendation.

**Daily goal:** less than \_\_\_\_\_ mg total (\_\_\_\_\_ mg per meal and \_\_\_\_\_ mg per snack)

Food Group	Choose More Often	Choose Less Often	Choose Less Often
	Low in Sodium < 100 mg/serving	Med Sodium 100-300 mg/serving	High Sodium > 300 mg/serving
Spices, Sauces & Condiments	Cinnamon, garlic, curry, mint, lemon juice, dill, onion, parsley, basil, dry mustard, paprika, oregano, Tabasco sauce, vinegar, etc.	BBQ sauce, catsup, chili sauce, salsa, gravies, mustard mayonnaise, tomato sauce, bottled salad dressing	Salt, MSG., salted condiments like: garlic/onion/seasoning salt, marinades, teriyaki sauce, Worcestershire sauce
Grains	Flour, rice, pasta noodles, whole grains, matzo, hot cereals (not instant), unsalted popcorn, Shredded Wheat	Breads and rolls, most ready-to-eat cereals, biscuits, muffins, cakes, pies, cookies, pastries, pancakes, waffles, etc.	Commercially prepared spaghetti with sauce, instant hot cereals, pretzels, crackers, salted popcorn, chips and other snack foods
Vegetables & Fruits	Fresh, frozen and canned fruits, fresh and plain frozen vegetables (not types with sauces or seasonings)	Canned vegetables, frozen lima beans, frozen peas	Pickled vegetables, olives, pickles, sauerkraut, vegetables with seasoned sauces
Beverages	Carbonated beverages, coffee, tea, most mineral water	Milk, buttermilk	Tomato juice, vegetable juice
Fish, Poultry, Meat and Other Dishes	Fresh meat w/o salt such as beef & veal, lamb, poultry, pork, eggs, unsalted nuts and peanut butter, tofu, green soybeans	Fresh shellfish, salted peanut butter	Bacon, ham, corned beef, luncheon meats, sausages, salami, processed turkey, frozen, restaurant or prepackaged entrees, canned/packaged soups, salted nuts
Milk Products	Cream cheese, ricotta or Swiss cheese, unsalted butter or margarine	Milk, buttermilk, salted butter or margarine, ice cream, pudding	Most cheeses, such as blue, cottage, parmesan, American