

Family Health Centers Nutrition Program
LOW SALT / LOW SODIUM GUIDELINES

Newest health guidelines recommend people consume no more than 2400 mg of sodium a day. That's equal to ~ 1 teaspoon of table salt, which is composed of sodium chloride. This total amount of sodium includes what is already in the product upon purchase, the amount added in cooking or preparation, and the amount added at the table. Most people consume excess sodium by eating too many processed foods and also by adding too much salt to their food.

The easiest way to limit sodium in your foods is to buy fresh foods and prepare them from scratch limiting the amount of salt added. Read food labels. Look for food products labeled low sodium, low salt or no salt added. A single serving shouldn't have more than ~140 mg of sodium. Look for packaged meals (eg-microwave dinners) with no more than ~500 mg of sodium. Fresh and frozen foods typically have less sodium than foods packaged in cans, boxes, mixes, instant or convenience food products. Drain and rinse canned foods to remove some of the sodium. Use herbs, spices and salt-free seasonings to flavor foods. Eat most meals at home; limit dining out as you have little control over how foods are prepared.

For more information, go to http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new_dash.pdf, the DASH Eating Plan.

To cut back on your sodium intake, follow these guidelines:

FOODS TO EAT

FOODS TO LIMIT

DAIRY:

milk
yogurt
low sodium cheese

buttermilk, most cheeses, especially
processed spreads,
pimento cheese

MEAT, FISH, EGGS, DRIED BEANS, NUTS AND SEEDS:

fresh or frozen meat or fish, eggs, dried
peas and beans (legumes), low salt or
drained and rinsed canned fish (eg- tuna);
unsalted nuts and seeds, peanut butter

cold cuts and luncheon meats, hot dogs,
bacon, sausage, chipped beef, corned
beef, ham; tuna, salmon, herring or
sardines canned with salt or brine;
packaged dinners - macaroni and cheese
mixes, frozen dinners, pizza; salted nuts
and seeds

BREADS AND STARCHES:

loaf and sandwich breads, cooked
from scratch, low sodium cereals; rice,
pasta, oatmeal, millet, buckwheat,
quinoa, bulghur, couscous cooked from
scratch, quick breads made from scratch

breads, rolls and crackers with salted
toppings, quick breads made from a mix
(pancakes, waffles, cornbread, biscuits,
muffins...), high sodium cereals, commercial
or instant potato, rice or grain mixes, salted
snacks such as chips, pretzels, popcorn

FOODS TO EAT

FOODS TO LIMIT

VEGETABLES:

fresh or frozen without sauces, canned vegetables - can drain and rinse

tomato and vegetable juices, sauerkraut, pickles, olives, relish

FRUITS:

any fresh or frozen

maraschino cherries, dried fruits with sodium sulfate

SOUPS:

low sodium or homemade soups, low sodium broth or bouillon

canned or boxed soups, soup mixes, regular broth, bouillon

MISCELLANEOUS:

low salt or unsalted fats, syrups, jams, dips and desserts made from scratch, herbs and spices, onion powder, garlic powder

salad dressings, gravies, soy sauce, barbecue and steak sauces, meat tenderizers, teriyaki sauce, salt, 'lite' salt, sea salt, celery salt, onion salt, garlic salt, monosodium glutamate, salted fats (salt pork, fat back, streak of lean); desserts from mixes, energy drinks

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If you would like personal instruction on how to incorporate nutritional guidelines into your life and improve your health, schedule an appointment with:
Karen Youket, Dietitian / Nutritionist
by calling The Family Health Centers at
828-258-8681