

# Salt

The average North American consumes about **twice** their daily limit of sodium. High consumption of sodium may increase blood pressure, a risk factor for heart attack and stroke.

**The average adult should not exceed 2300mg per day.  
Those with high blood pressure should limit themselves to 1500 mg per day.**

## Should I cut out all natural and added salts from my diet?

No, humans require a small amount (500mg – 1500mg/day) of salt to maintain health. Salt is essential for fluid balance, nerve and muscle function.

## Is one type of salt healthier than another? How about “no-salt” products?

Look for large grain salts such as **sea salt** and Himalayan salts. These salts have less sodium, more flavour and trace mineral content compared to table salt. **Himalayan Pink salt** in particular has traces of calcium, iron, potassium and magnesium.

“No-salt” salt products should also be used in moderation! Although these products don’t have sodium chloride in them, they have other ingredients potentially harmful to our health.

**Note: All types of salts and salt substitutes should be used at very small amounts.**

## Did you know?

**Only 11% of our daily sodium intake is added in cooking and at the table.**

**77% comes from processed foods and restaurant meals.**

## High Sodium Foods

Tomato sauce (½ cup)	585 – 721 mg
Deli meats (75g)	552 – 970 mg
Bread (1 slice)	228 – 238 mg
Canned soups (1 cup)	360 – 1300 mg
Cheddar cheese, 1 oz	788 – 970 mg
Condiments (2 Tbsp)	334 – 358 mg
Frozen dinners	314 – 529 mg
Soy sauce (1 Tbsp)	600 – 800 mg
Anchovies, canned (2.5oz)	914 – 1038 mg
Bacon (2.5 oz)	1555 – 1920mg

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## Sodium Intake Guide per Serving

Refer to this guideline when reading Nutrition Facts Tables on packaged food items.

Sodium (per serving)	Daily Value %	Intake
> 360 milligrams	≥ 15 %	Too much!
121 – 360 milligrams	6 - 14 %	Be careful
0 – 120 milligrams	0 – 5 %	Go ahead

### Nutrition claims on Packaging: What do they mean?

- **Unsalted:** no added sodium to the food, but there may be natural sources already in the food.
- **Sodium free:** a serving has less than 5mg of sodium
- **Low sodium:** a serving has 140 mg or less of sodium
- **Reduced sodium:** 25% less sodium than what the food normally has. *Be aware, as this is still usually too much.*

### Tiny Habits for Less Salt!

- ✓ Read nutrition labels. Use the above guidelines for recommended sodium amounts.
- ✓ Swap the salt shaker for fresh herbs and spices to season a dish.
- ✓ Limit dining out. **An average restaurant meal has 1,455mg of sodium.**  
Focus on more home cooked meals.
- ✓ When dining out request nutrition information, and ask meals to be prepared with little to no salt.
- ✓ Ask for gravy, sauces and salad dressings “on the side” , and use lightly
- ✓ Limit consumption of pre-packaged or processed food such as canned soups, frozen dinners and pre-seasoned meats
- ✓ Look for canned foods soaked in water, without salt.
- ✓ Choose unsalted snacks such as nuts, seeds and whole grain crackers

**A low sodium diet includes lots of fresh vegetables, whole grains, lean meat seasoned with herbs and spices, fish, unsalted nuts, seeds, healthy oils and fresh fruit.**