

What is sodium?

Sodium is a mineral found in many foods. Our body needs some sodium to work the right way. Most of the sodium in our diet is from salt (sodium chloride). Foods that have higher amounts of sodium include:

- Pre-packaged foods in a bag, box or can. These are the main source of sodium in our diet.
- Fast foods and restaurant foods.
- Cured meats, such as ham, sausage, bacon and pepperoni.
- Sports drinks like Powerade and Gatorade.

Why does my child need a low sodium diet?

A low sodium diet has been proven to lower blood pressure in people with high blood pressure.

How much sodium is OK for my child to eat?

| Age | Highest amount of sodium that is OK in 24 hours | General guidelines for meals and snacks |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Adults and teens ages 14 and older | Less than 2300 mg | 500 mg per meal / 200 mg per snack |
| Children ages 9 to 13 | Less than 1800 mg | 500 mg per meal / 150 mg per snack |
| Children ages 4 to 8 | Less than 1500 mg | 400 mg per meal / 150 mg per snack |
| Children ages 1 to 3 | Less than 1200 mg | 240 mg per meal (5 meals per day) |

How do I check the amount of sodium in foods?

- Nutrition Facts labels list the amount of sodium per serving size. Serving size is the suggested amount to eat.
- Read Nutrition Facts labels when you choose foods for your child.
 - See page 4 for practice reading a Nutrition Facts label.
 - Check the label for the sodium amount.
 - **REMEMBER: The sodium amount is based on 1 serving.**
- Choose foods that say reduced sodium or no added salt on the label.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Eating a low sodium diet, continued

Choosing lower sodium foods

| | LIMIT these | CHOOSE these |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Condiments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ketchup, mustard, BBQ sauce, A1 steak sauce • Relish • Pickles, olives • Gravy • Salad dressings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low sodium ketchup • Jelly or jam • Homemade salad dressing (vinaigrette) • Vinegar • Homemade guacamole or salsa |
| Seasonings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salt or MSG • Garlic or onion salt • Bouillon • Soy or teriyaki sauce • Fish or oyster sauce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Dash • Fresh garlic or onion • Garlic or onion powder • Lemon or lime juice • Pepper • Dried spices • Fresh or dried herbs (like basil or oregano) • Oils (olive, coconut, avocado or vegetable) |
| Fruits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All kinds of fruits are good including canned and frozen. | |
| Vegetables | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned vegetables or frozen vegetables in sauce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh or frozen vegetables • Canned vegetables without added salt (check label) |
| Meat or protein | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned meats • Bacon, hot dogs, bratwurst • Deli meats • Sausage, chorizo • Canned baked beans • Ham, pepperoni, salami | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh poultry, beef, fish • Eggs • Tofu • Hummus • Nut based butters (like peanut or almond) • Canned or dry beans without added salt (check label) |

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Eating a low sodium diet, continued

| | LIMIT these | CHOOSE these |
|----------------|---|--|
| Breads | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-packaged noodles (like Ramen Noodles, Cup Noodles, Mac and Cheese or Hamburger Helper) • Pre-packaged rice mixes (like Rice-a-Roni) • White breads (hot dog buns, hamburger buns or hoagie rolls) • Bagels • Flour tortillas • Eggo waffles or pancake mixes (like Bisquick or Krusteaz) • Pre-packaged stuffing • Pastries like croissants or sweet rolls | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pasta or rice cooked without added salt to water • Plain oatmeal • Puffed cereals or shredded wheat • Corn tortillas • Pita bread • Grains such as quinoa, couscous, grits or barley • Whole wheat bread |
| Dairy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processed cheeses (like American, squeeze cheese or Velveeta) • Nacho cheese dips • Buttermilk, sweetened condensed milk, evaporated milk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheese (Swiss, cheddar or mozzarella) • Yogurt • Soy, almond, rice or regular milk • Half and half |
| Dinner choices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frozen TV dinners (like Lean Cuisine) • Canned soups • Frozen meals (like pizza or burritos) • Hot Pockets • Jarred sauces (like spaghetti or alfredo sauce) • Fast food (like Subway, McDonald's, Chick-fil-A or Arby's) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homemade chili • Homemade stews or soups • Homemade pizza • Low salt soups |

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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Eating a low sodium diet, continued

The Nutrition Facts label shows:

- 1 serving size is about 9 pretzels.
- The sodium amount is 500 mg per serving.
- This means your child will get 500 mg of sodium if they eat 9 pretzels.
- Your child will get 1000 mg of sodium if they eat the entire bag (2 servings per bag).



Nutrition Facts 2 servings per container

Serving size 1 oz (28g/about 9 pretzels)

Amount per serving

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Calories | 110 |
| Total Fat | 1g |
| Saturated Fat | 0g |
| Trans Fat | 0g |
| Cholesterol | 0mg |
| Sodium | 500mg |
| Total Carbohydrate | 23g |
| Dietary Fiber | 1g |
| Sugars less than | 1g |
| Protein | 2g |

| | |
|------------|----|
| Vitamin A | 0% |
| Vitamin C | 0% |
| Calcium | 0% |
| Iron | 8% |
| Thiamin | 8% |
| Riboflavin | 4% |
| Niacin | 6% |
| Phosphorus | 2% |

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.



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