

Low Sodium Food Choices

Making small changes in your eating can make a big difference in sodium intake.

You will find that your taste adjusts over time and you get used to eating less sodium. You should consume no more than 2,000 mg of sodium per day.

1. Look at both the serving size and the sodium amount.

Food labels list the amount of sodium for each serving. The serving size is located at the top of the label, usually right under the “Nutrition Facts” title.

2. Check the serving size carefully.

A single serving is often very small. If you eat more than the serving size, you have eaten more sodium than is listed for one serving.

3. Multiply the amount of servings you eat by the sodium per serving.

For example:

- There are 160 mg of sodium in a 1-cup serving.
- If you eat two servings (2 cups), then you need to multiply 160 mg by 2.
- $160 \times 2 = 320$ mg of sodium you will be eating.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (128g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
<small>% Daily Value*</small>	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 8g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 240mg	6%

*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.

CHOOSE FOODS WITH LABELS THAT READ:

✓	Salt and Sodium Free This means it has less than 5 mg per serving.
✓	Very Low Sodium This means it has less than 35 mg of sodium per serving.
✓	Low Sodium This means it has less than 140 mg per serving.









WATCH OUT!

Labels with the following words have less sodium than normal, but it is usually still too much.

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|---|-----------------------------------|
| ✗ | Reduced Sodium |
| ✗ | Light in Sodium or Lightly Salted |

Choose Low-Sodium Foods

Find “salt shocker” foods that you may normally eat and replace them with lower-sodium foods.

	Choose	Limit or Avoid
 Meals and Soups	Home-cooked meals and soups. Low-sodium canned soups.	Premade, frozen or restaurant meals. Regular (full-sodium) canned soups.
 Meat, Poultry and Fish	Fresh or frozen meat, poultry and fish (check for added salt water or saline). Low-sodium canned products (rinse before eating).	Meat, poultry and fish that has been cured, smoked or spiced. Bacon, ham, sausage, hot dogs, corned beef, lunch meat, jerky. Regular (full-sodium) canned products.
 Cheese	Swiss, ricotta and fresh mozzarella cheese. Cream cheese. Low-sodium cheese and cottage cheese.	Processed cheese. Cheese spreads, dips and sauces. Regular (full-sodium) cheese and cottage cheese.
 Savory Snacks	Low-sodium or unsalted nuts, seeds, pretzels, chips or crackers. Homemade (not microwave) popcorn.	Salted nuts, seeds, pretzels, chips, crackers or popcorn.
 Grains	Plain, unseasoned rice, grains and pasta. Unflavored oatmeal. Puffed rice or shredded wheat cereal.	Bread and rolls. Instant hot cereals. Boxed baking mixes (waffles, pancakes, bread, cake). Croutons. Instant noodles. Rice or pasta mixes.
 Vegetables	Canned or frozen vegetables without added sodium or sauces. Low-sodium tomato sauce and vegetable juice.	Relishes, olives and pickled vegetables. Boxed potato mixes. Canned and frozen vegetables. Regular (full-sodium) tomato sauce and vegetable juice.
 Sauces, Dressing and Condiments	Homemade sauces and dressings. Vinegar, lemons, herbs or dry mustard. Low-sodium sauces, dressings and condiments.	Barbecue, teriyaki and steak sauce. Fish sauce. All soy sauce, including reduced-sodium. Gravy. Marinades. Regular (full-sodium) condiments such as ketchup, mustard, cocktail sauce and tartar sauce.
 Seasonings	Fresh garlic and onion. Lemon juice and vinegar. Spices and herbs such as oregano, chili, cumin and basil. Low-sodium bouillon cubes. Salt-free seasoning blends.	Dried onion and garlic. Seasoned salt. MSG. Meat flavorings and tenderizers. Full-sodium bouillon cubes. Seasoning blends that contain salt.

Additional Resources

- [fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov) – Search the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for information on how to read food labels.
- [sodiumbreakup.heart.org](https://www.sodiumbreakup.heart.org) – American Heart Association