



Patient & Family Guide
2022

High Sodium Foods to Limit or Avoid



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Eating too much sodium (salt) can lead to high blood pressure, kidney disease, and liver and heart problems.

If you have heart, kidney, or liver disease, following a low sodium meal plan can help you manage your condition and feel better. It can also help the medication(s) you take for these conditions work better.

Always check the serving size on the label:

- Choose foods with **10% or less daily value (DV) of sodium per serving.**
- Choose condiments with **5% or less DV of sodium per serving.**

Tips to control sodium intake

- Eating less sodium involves more than just taking away the salt shaker. In fact, **most of the sodium we eat comes from packaged and convenience foods.** Avoid these foods even if you do not add salt during cooking or at the table.
- If a food is not fresh, it is usually higher in sodium. Choose fresh and homemade foods more often.

- Cut back on salt slowly. Your taste buds will change over time and you will start to enjoy the real flavour of foods.
- The word “seasoned” usually means salt has been added (for example, “seasoned” chicken breasts). It is best to avoid these foods.
- Read food labels. Choose foods that have 10% or less DV of sodium per serving. **Foods labelled “reduced sodium”, “less sodium”, or “lightly salted” may still be high in sodium.**
- Rinse canned foods (like vegetables or beans) with water before eating.
- Go light on the condiments. Choose condiments with less than 5% DV of sodium per serving. **Remember:** if you double the serving, then you double the sodium.
- Use natural flavourings, like herbs, fresh garlic, and lemon or lime juice.
- Try low salt spice blends (such as Mrs. Dash™, McCormick® Salt Free blends, or PC® Blue Menu™ No Salt Added Seasoning Blend).

- The salt substitutes listed below do not contain sodium, but they do contain potassium. **Check with your primary health care provider or dietitian before using these products:**
 - › Half Salt™
 - › NoSalt®
 - › Herbamare® Natural Salt Substitute
 - › Nu-Salt®

**What are your questions?
Please ask. We are here to help you.**

Quick guide to % Daily Value (DV) of nutrients:

- > 5% or less is low.
- > 15% (**10%** for sodium) or more is high.

The label below indicates a high sodium food to avoid. Choose foods with at most 10% DV of sodium. **Less is better.**

Sample label for macaroni and cheese:

1. Check serving size and calories
2. Limit fats and check for high sodium content
3. Get enough of these nutrients
4. Footnotes (more information)

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)			
Serving Per Container 2			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories	250	Calories from Fat 110	
% Daily Values*			
Total Fat	12g		18%
	Saturated Fat 3g		15%
	Trans Fat 3g		
Cholesterol	30mg		10%
Sodium	470mg		20%
Total Carbohydrate	31g		10%
	Dietary Fiber 0g		0%
	Sugars 5g		
Protein	5g		10%
Vitamin A	4%	•	Vitamin C 2%
Calcium	20%	•	Iron 4%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.			
	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2400mg	2400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

High sodium foods to limit or avoid

Snack foods

- Chips and other salted snack foods (such as Cheezies[®], Doritos[®], party mix)
- Salted crackers, nuts, popcorn (bagged, microwave, movie theatre), and pretzels

Quick (convenience) foods

- Battered, frozen fish or chicken
- Bottled or canned tomato and pasta sauces
- Canned beans (unless labelled “no salt added”)
- Canned or dried soups, broths, and bouillon (such as OXO[®]), unless labelled “no salt added”
- Canned or powdered gravies
- Canned seafood (such as sardines, kippers, oysters)
 - › Canned tuna and salmon: Choose low sodium or packed in water. Drain and rinse with water before eating.
- Canned meats
 - › Devilled ham
 - › Flakes of chicken, ham, or turkey
 - › KAM[®], SPAM[®], etc.
 - › Potted meats (like pâtés)

- Fast food and takeout items (check “Nutrition Facts” information at the restaurant or online)
- Instant noodles (such as Mr. Noodles®)
- Instant potatoes and scalloped potato mixes
- Packaged and boxed foods with more than 10% DV of sodium per serving (check the serving size on the label)
- Packaged frozen meals (like microwave dinners, meat pies, pizza)
- Seasoned pasta and rice mixes (Hamburger Helper™, Kraft Dinner®, Knorr® Sidekicks®, Rice-A-Roni®, Fast & Fancy®)

Salted, smoked, pickled, or cured meats and fish

- Bacon
- Bologna
- Corned beef
- Deli meats and cold cuts
- Ham
- Hot dogs and sausages
- Pepperoni and salami
- Salted, dried, or smoked fish

Grain products

- Biscuits, pancakes, and waffles (store-bought, mixes, and frozen products)
- Breads, cereals, and crackers with more than 10% DV of sodium per serving

Milk products

- Blue, feta, Romano, Parmesan, and hard cheeses
- Processed cheese (such as cheese slices, Cheez Whiz[®], Velveeta[®])

Vegetables and fruit

- Canned vegetables (unless labelled “no salt added”)
- Pickled vegetables
- Fermented vegetables, like sauerkraut and kimchi
- Vegetable juices (unless labeled “low sodium” or “no salt added”)

Condiments

- Meat tenderizers
- M.S.G. (monosodium glutamate), Ac'cent® Flavor Enhancer
- Pickled foods (like olives, relish, sauerkraut)
- Salad dressings
- Salsa
- Salt, any kind (including sea salt and Himalayan salt)
 - › Sauces (such as BBQ, chili, fish, hoisin, hot, soy, steak, teriyaki)
 - › Seasonings made with salt (like celery, garlic, or onion salt, steak spice, seasoned pepper)

When planning meals, follow Canada's Food Guide healthy eating recommendations:

Eat a variety of healthy foods each day.

- Eat a lot of vegetables and fruits.
- Eat protein foods.
 - › Choose protein foods that come from plants more often.
- Choose whole grain foods.
 - › Limit highly processed foods.
- Make water your drink of choice.
- Replace sugary drinks with water.

Be mindful of your eating habits.

- › Take time to eat.
- › Notice when you are hungry and when you are full.
- Cook more often.
 - › Plan what you eat.
 - › Involve others in planning and making meals.
- Enjoy your food.
 - › Culture and food traditions can be a part of healthy eating.
- Eat meals with others.

Resources

For more tips on how to follow a low sodium diet:

Health Canada

- › www.healthcanada.ca

Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada

- › www.heartandstroke.ca

Do a web search on:

- › DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension)
- › Mediterranean diet

Visit:

- › www.nshealth.ca/sites/nshealth.ca/files/patientinformation/1158.pdf

For nutrition counselling:

Do a web search for: “ns health nutrition counselling” to see what services are available in your community.

Nutrition Education and Counselling (Dietitians)

- Registered dietitians work in some grocery stores. They offer many services, including store tours.

- Check your local grocery store for help from a registered dietitian. Do a web search for: “dietitian and (name of your grocery store)”
 - › [www.nshealth.ca/service-details/Nutrition%20Education%20and%20Counselling%20\(Dietitians\)](http://www.nshealth.ca/service-details/Nutrition%20Education%20and%20Counselling%20(Dietitians))

Cookbooks

- There are many cookbooks to help you lower salt in your meals. Any cookbook by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, Dietitians of Canada, or Diabetes Canada has good information. You can find these in most libraries and bookstores.
- Other good cookbooks:
 - › *Hold the Salt*, and *Hold that Hidden Salt* by Maureen Tilley, a local dietitian
 - › *Delicious DASH Flavors*, and *Low Salt DASH Dinners*, by Sandra Nowlan

It can be hard to make changes to your eating habits. If you have any questions, please ask to talk with a dietitian. We are here to help you.

Dietitian: _____

Phone: _____

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.