

DuPage Medical Group

WE CARE FOR YOU

# salt & your health





Consuming too much salt (sodium chloride) can cause high blood pressure in some people. In fact, you probably don't realize how much sodium you eat each day.

The Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee suggests an intake of 1,500 mg of sodium per day which equals about 2/3 of a teaspoon of salt. Most of us have almost ten times that during one day. Trying to adjust your lifestyle so that you eat less sodium than normal can be quite difficult because salt is in almost every food we consume. It occurs naturally in products, but is also used as a preservative in a large majority of processed foods such as fast foods and canned soups.

Though your healthcare professional has advised you to reduce the amount of sodium you consume, you can't avoid it all together. Your body needs some sodium to regulate the amount of water and blood in your body. Other important functions of sodium include sending signals from your brain to your nerves and muscle contractions.

## support & guidance

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### **high blood pressure**

High blood pressure (HBP) can occur at any age to anyone. It doesn't discriminate. In fact, over one-half of people over age 65 have HBP. One reason why HBP is common among people over 65 is because they consume too much salt. As the body ages, the taste buds are not as alert as they used to be, so more salt is needed for the same flavor food had when the taste buds were more active.

There are many things that can increase your chances of getting HBP. The common risk factors include a family history of HBP, being overweight, getting too little exercise, drinking alcohol and being of African-American descent. Uncontrolled HBP can lead to several complications such as heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, blindness and congestive heart failure. By starting to get your HBP under control now, you increase your chances of not having these complications.





## sodium claims on food labels

claim	definition
sodium-free, salt-free	< 5 mg sodium per serving
low sodium	140 mg sodium or less per serving
light in sodium	50% or 1/2 less sodium than the regular product; restricted to foods with more than 40 calories per serving or more than 3 grams of fat per serving
very low sodium	35 mg or less of sodium in a serving
reduced sodium	At least 25% less sodium when compared to regular version of product
unsalted without added salt no salt added	No salt is added during processing. The product it resembles is normally processed with salt. The label bears the statement “not a sodium-free food” or “not for control of sodium in the diet” if the food is not sodium free. None of the ingredients contain a significant amount of salt.

You may be asking how can I lower my sodium intake if almost all foods have sodium in them. It is important that you learn how to determine the amount of sodium in the foods you eat. If you are aware of what you are consuming you're more likely to reduce the amount of sodium in your diet. Tasting foods before adding extra helpings of salt may help you reduce the amount of salt you put on your food.

Following the suggestions to the right and changing your lifestyle to include exercise and less salt can lower your blood pressure and may reduce the amount of medicine you need. Do not change your medicine without checking with your healthcare professional.

### **resources for eating to prevent and control high blood pressure**

#### YOUR GUIDE TO LOWERING HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

This booklet includes information on the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan, tips for getting started, sample meal plans and recipes.

[www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp) | 301 592 8573

#### AIM FOR A HEALTHY WEIGHT

This includes a BMI calculator, tips for shopping and preparing food and a menu planner that is designed to guide daily food and meal choices based on one day's calorie allowance.

[www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health)

#### GOVERNMENT DIETARY GUIDELINES

Stay updated on the current dietary recommendations.

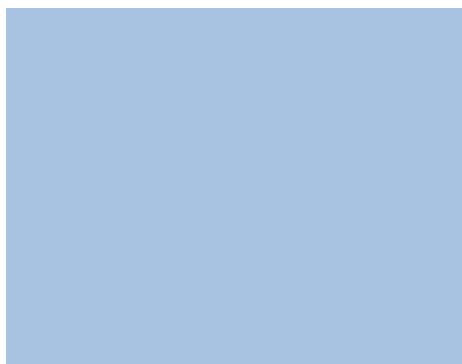
[www.dietaryguidelines.gov](http://www.dietaryguidelines.gov)

# lifestyle changes

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## 10 delicious ways to reduce high blood pressure

- 1 Be spicy instead of salty. In cooking and at the table, flavor foods with herbs, spices, lemon, lime, vinegar or salt-free seasoning blends.
- 2 Use fresh poultry, fish and lean meat, rather than canned, smoked or processed types.
- 3 Eat moderate portions and when snacking, eat fresh fruit and vegetables, unbuttered and unsalted popcorn, or bread sticks.
- 4 Choose “convenience” foods that are lower in sodium. Cut back on frozen dinners, pizza, packaged mixes, canned soups or broths and salad dressings—these often have a lot of sodium.
- 5 Start your day with whole grain breakfast cereals that are lower in salt and sodium.
- 6 Cook rice, pasta and hot cereals without salt. Cut back on instant or flavored rice, pasta and cereal mixes, which usually have added salt.
- 7 Buy fresh, plain frozen or canned with “no salt added” vegetables.
- 8 Drink water or club soda instead of soft drinks high in sugar.
- 9 When eating out, move the saltshaker away—limit condiments such as catsup, pickles and sauces with high salt containing ingredients.
- 10 Cut back on processed and fast foods that are high in salt and sodium.



# general sodium guidelines

food category	low sodium foods 😊	high sodium foods ☹️
bread & cereals	Enriched white, wheat, rye and pumpernickel bread, hard rolls and dinner rolls, muffins, cornbread and waffles, most dry cereals, cooked cereal without added salt, low sodium or homemade bread crumbs	Breads, rolls and crackers with salted tops, quick breads, instant hot cereals, pancakes, commercial bread stuffing, self-rising flour and biscuit mixes, commercial bread crumbs or cracker crumbs
meats & meat substitutes	Any fresh or frozen beef, lamb, pork, poultry, fish and shrimp, rinsed canned tuna or salmon, eggs and egg substitutes, low sodium cheese (i.e. low sodium ricotta, cream cheese), low sodium cottage cheese, regular yogurt, low sodium peanut butter, dried peas and beans, frozen dinners with less than 500 mg of sodium per serving	Any fish or poultry, smoked, cured, salted, koshered or canned meat including bacon, chipped beef, cold cuts, ham, hot dogs, sausage, sardines, anchovies, crab, lobster, imitation seafood, marinated herring and pickled meats, frozen breaded meats, pickled eggs, regular hard and processed cheese, cheese spreads and sauces, salted nuts
fruits	Most fresh, frozen and canned	Fruits processed with salt or sodium containing compounds such as dried fruit

These guidelines are based on a 1,500 mg sodium diet





food category

low sodium foods ☺

high sodium foods ☹

vegetables

Fresh, frozen vegetables and low sodium canned vegetables

Regular canned vegetables, sauerkraut, pickled vegetables, and others prepared in brine, frozen vegetables in sauces, vegetables seasoned with ham, bacon or salt pork

potatoes & potato substitutes

White or sweet potatoes, squash, enriched rice, barley, noodles, spaghetti, macaroni and other pastas cooked without salt, homemade bread stuffing

Commercially prepared potato, rice or pasta mixes, commercial bread stuffing

soups

Low sodium commercially canned and dehydrated soups, broths and bouillons, homemade broth and soups without added salt and made with allowed vegetables, cream soups within milk allowance

Regular canned or dehydrated soups, broths or bouillon

desserts & sweets

All desserts and sweets made with milk should be eaten in moderation

Instant pudding mixes and flour cake mixes

# general sodium guidelines

food category	low sodium foods 😊	high sodium foods ☹️
drinks	Milk (limit 3 cups per day), buttermilk (limit 1 cup per week), eggnog, all fruit juices, low sodium, salt-free vegetable juices, low sodium carbonated beverages	Malted milk, milkshakes, chocolate milk, regular vegetable or tomato juices, commercially softened water used for drinking or cooking
fats	Butter or margarine, vegetable oils, unsalted salad dressings, regular salad dressings (limit 1 tbsp. per meal), light, sour and heavy cream	Regular salad dressings containing bacon fat, bacon bits and salt pork, snack dips made with instant soup mixes or processed cheese
miscellaneous	Salt substitute with physician's approval, pepper, herbs, spices, vinegar, lemon or lime juice, hot pepper sauce, low sodium soy sauce (1 tsp.), low sodium condiments (i.e. catsup, chili sauce, mustard), fresh ground horseradish, unsalted tortilla chips, pretzels, potato chips, popcorn, salsa (2 tbsp.)	Any seasoning made with salt including garlic salt, celery salt, onion salt and seasoned salt, sea salt, rock salt, kosher salt, meat tenderizers, monosodium glutamate, regular soy sauce, barbecue sauce, teriyaki sauce, steak sauce, worcestershire sauce and most flavored vinegars, canned gravy and mixes, regular condiments, salted snack foods, olives

These guidelines are based on a 1,500 mg sodium diet



For appointments with  
one of our dieticians,  
please call 630 286 5090.

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*You can also visit [www.dupagemedicalgroup.com/wellness](http://www.dupagemedicalgroup.com/wellness)  
for more information on healthy living.*

[dupagemedicalgroup.com](http://dupagemedicalgroup.com)