

WHAT ABOUT SODIUM (SALT)?

What is sodium (salt)?

Sodium comes in various types and is an essential element. Sodium chloride, or table salt, is used to preserve foods, helps to keep color, and flavors foods. Very little is needed in our diets.

Where is salt found?

Salt is found naturally in most foods. Salt is also added by food manufacturers as a preservative and to flavor foods. Some medications contain sodium as well, such as antacids.

Why should too much salt be avoided?

Diets high in sodium are linked to high blood pressure which can lead to heart attacks and strokes. The American Heart Association recommends you aim to eat **less than 1,500 mg** of sodium per day. Most Americans eat 3,436 mg of sodium daily.

What are the salt and sodium equivalents?

- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt = 600 mg sodium
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt = 1,200 mg of sodium
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp salt = 1,800 mg of sodium
- 1 tsp salt = 2,400 mg of sodium

What are some high sodium (salt) foods?

Accent	Canned soups
Pickles	Tomato sauce
Soy sauce	Canned foods
Canned broth and bouillon	Prepared mixes
Mustard	Salty snacks
Seasoned salt	Fast foods

What are some helpful hints to avoid too much salt?

- Choose fresh or frozen food items or canned items without salt
- Choose unsalted nuts and seeds
- Limit or avoid salty snacks
- Choose unsalted or low sodium broths, soups and bouillon
- Choose low fat yogurt
- Use spices and herbs for flavoring foods
- Add lemon juice for flavoring fish and vegetables
- Don't add salt at the table. Use more pepper

A good clue as to whether a packaged product has too much salt, look at the label. The number of calories per serving should have about the same amount of sodium per serving.