

## Low salt diet

### How much salt do I need?

- Although our body must have some salt (or **sodium**), we often eat more than we need. Nutritious fresh foods such as cereals, vegetables, fruit, meat and dairy products contain plenty of sodium - **there is no need to add extra salt to food.**
- **Less than 2300mg** of sodium (equal to a teaspoon of salt) each day is desirable. In some cases you may need less than this.

### Why avoid salt?

- Blood levels of **sodium** are carefully controlled by the kidneys. Eating too much salt forces the kidneys to work harder, and can increase blood pressure. If you have high blood pressure, heart disease or your body is holding extra fluid (such as in heart failure, kidney or liver disease), it is even more important to limit sodium (salt).
- Salty foods also make you thirsty, which can make it difficult to limit fluid.

### Tips to reduce salt:

#### 1. Choose low salt foods

As most sodium (75%) comes from processed foods, when shopping:

- Buy more fresh, unprocessed foods
- Choose foods labelled “low salt” or “no added salt”
- Some foods labelled “reduced salt” can still contain high levels of sodium. Check the nutrition panel

Nutrition Information		
Servings per package:1		
Serving Size:35g		
	Per Serve	Per 100g
Energy	501kJ	1430kJ
Protein	3.5g	10g
Fat	0.4g	1g
Saturated fat	0.2g	0.5g
Carbohydrate		
Total	25.3g	72.2g
Sugar	7.5g	21.5g
Fibre	3.4g	9.7g
Sodium	185mg	535mg

\* Aim for sodium (Na) content of less than 150mg per 100g

Food	Choose (lower salt)	Avoid (high salt)
<b>Breads &amp; Cereals</b>  <b>Often high in salt</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salt reduced bread</li> <li>• Fresh and dried pasta</li> <li>• Salt reduced and low salt crackers and biscuits eg <i>Ryvita, Vitaweat</i>, rice and corn cakes</li> <li>• ‘No added salt’ wraps (eg. White corn tortillas – check the label)</li> <li>• Rolled oats, porridge</li> <li>• <i>Weetbix, Sustain</i>, muesli, <i>Just Right</i>, puffed wheat, oat or wheat bran</li> <li>• Rice</li> <li>• Plain flour &amp; cornflour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Savoury crackers</li> <li>• Sweet biscuits &amp; shortbread</li> <li>• Croissants, pastry, cakes, scones, muffins</li> <li>• Savoury breads, bread, bread rolls (products based on SR flour are high in salt)</li> <li>• Packet rice &amp; pasta with flavouring, instant noodles</li> <li>• Breakfast cereals with <i>more than 200mg sodium per serve</i> eg <i>Cornflakes, Rice Bubbles, Bran Flakes</i></li> <li>• Tinned spaghetti</li> </ul>
<b>Fruit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh, dried, tinned fruit</li> <li>• Fruit juices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Olives</li> <li>• Canned plums</li> </ul>
<b>Vegetables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All fresh and frozen vegetables</li> <li>• Legumes (lentils, chickpeas, soup mix, soybeans, kidney beans), canned bean mix</li> <li>• ‘No added salt’ canned vegetables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pickled and canned vegetables</li> <li>• Marinated vegetables – eg sun-dried tomatoes</li> <li>• Tomato or vegetable juice</li> <li>• Baked beans</li> </ul>
<b>Meat, fish, chicken and eggs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh, unprocessed meat (lamb, beef, veal, pork), chicken, turkey, fish and seafood</li> <li>• Eggs</li> <li>• ‘no added salt’ tinned seafood eg tuna/sardines/salmon in springwater</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cured, smoked, canned or salted meat eg corned beef, ham, bacon, sausages, salami, brawn, pate, frankfurts</li> <li>• Deli/roisserie chicken</li> <li>• Meat pies, sausage rolls, fish fingers, crumbed or battered fish, hamburgers, BBQ chicken, pizza, chicken nuggets, Chinese food</li> <li>• Tinned fish in brine or tomato/sweet chilli sauce, anchovies</li> </ul>
<b>Milk, yoghurt and cheese</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk – all types</li> <li>• Yoghurt</li> <li>• Custard, dairy desserts, icecream</li> <li>• Ricotta or continental (quark) cheese</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheese : cheddar, brie, camembert, feta, parmesan</li> <li>• Cheese spreads</li> <li>• Cream cheese</li> <li>• Reduced salt cheeses (may be ok in small quantities – read the label)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Fats</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsalted butter</li> <li>• No added salt (e.g. <i>Becel</i>, <i>Sundew</i>) or reduced salt (<i>Gold'n Canola</i>, <i>Flora</i>) margarines</li> <li>• No added salt peanut butter</li> <li>• Oil</li> <li>• Avocado</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Butter</li> <li>• Margarine</li> <li>• Peanut butter</li> </ul>
<p><b>Drinks, snacks &amp; extras</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Drink water!</b></li> <li>• Cordial, softdrink</li> <li>• Home made, unsalted soups</li> <li>• <i>Milo</i>, tea, coffee</li> <li>• Unsalted nuts &amp; seeds</li> <li>• Jam, honey, syrup</li> <li>• Unsalted popcorn</li> <li>• Plain chocolate</li> <li>• Plain lollies</li> <li>• Mint sauce, apple sauce. “:No added salt” sauces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports drinks</li> <li>• Soup, Bonox</li> <li>• Tomato juice, vegetable juice</li> <li>• Clear aspirin or Panadol effervescent drinks e.g. alka-seltzer, <i>Eno</i> and vitamins e.g. <i>berocca</i></li> <li>• Dips, olives, marinated &amp; pickled foods</li> <li>• Most sauces - tomato sauce, tartare sauce, BBQ sauce, teriyaki, soy sauce (even reduced salt), <i>Worcestershire sauce</i>, cheese sauce</li> <li>• <i>Gravox</i>, gravy, stock cubes</li> <li>• Vegemite, meat &amp; fish paste</li> <li>• Salted nuts and snacks</li> <li>• Crisps, pretzels</li> <li>• Mustard, pickles, relish</li> </ul>

## 2. Do not add salt at the table or in cooking

What to use instead:

- Freshly ground pepper, dry mustard powder
- Lemon juice, lime juice, vinegar
- A sprinkle of dried herbs
- Chopped fresh herbs- basil, oregano, mint, rosemary, thyme, parsley, chives, sage, tarragon
- Garlic, curry, chilli, onion, fresh ginger, spring onions

- Alcohol in cooking
- Spices- nutmeg, ginger, cinnamon, cumin, cardamom

### Also try:

- Slowly cutting down your salt intake over a few months to allow your taste buds to adjust.
- Tasting food before adding salt or salty sauces



Other products such as sea salt, vegetable salt, celery salt, lemon pepper, herb salt can still contain high levels of sodium. Check the nutrition panel and ingredients. The product 'Lite Salt' is not a recommended salt alternative as it contains potassium.

#### **Flavour combinations to try:**

- Pork: garlic, lemon rind, coriander, apple sauce, ginger, mustard
- Beef: bay leaf, thyme, mustard, sage, red wine
- Lamb: mint, ginger, currant jelly, paprika, oregano, rosemary, garlic
- Chicken: sage, tarragon, garlic, white wine, chilli
- Fish: lemon juice, lemon pepper, lime juice, chives, parsley, vinegar
- Tomato: basil, garlic, black pepper, parsley, oregano
- Potato: chives, paprika, mint, parsley, black pepper
- Carrots: ginger, cinnamon, honey, parsley

### **3. Clearing up myths about salt**

- **Do you need extra salt if you sweat a lot?**

The body is very good at keeping the amount of salt it needs. You need **fluid** (preferably water), at least 1.5 litres daily, even more if you are very active and sweating a lot. Salt tablets are **not** recommended. Check with your doctor if you are on a fluid restriction.

- **Does extra salt stop cramps?**

Cramps are not due to a lack of salt. Drinking enough fluid and always warming up before exercise can help. Also check that your calcium intake (low fat dairy products are the best source) is adequate.

### **4. Count your salt**

- Aim to have **less than 2300mg of sodium each day**. In some cases, a limit of 1400mg daily may be needed.
- The table below provides a general guide.
- Check the nutrition information panel for an accurate measure of sodium per serve in a particular food.
- Any food with **more than 150mg sodium per serve** should be limited.

<b>FOOD</b>	<b>mg sodium</b>	<b>FOOD</b>	<b>mg sodium</b>
Bread, 1 slice	150	fresh, dried, canned fruit	0
Crumpet, 1	290	fresh or frozen veg, average serve	10
Porridge, muesli, <i>weetbix</i> , (low salt) small bowl	0 - 80	tinned vegetables (peas, corn, etc ) ½ cup	150
<i>Cornflakes</i> , <i>Nutrigrain</i> (high salt) small bowl	200 - 320	chicken/beef/lamb/pork, fresh 100g	40-60
Rice or pasta 1 cup	0	Chicken, deli/rotisserie, 100g	650
Noodles, instant, packet	900	ham, 2 thin slices 60g	950
2-3 crackers	100	bacon, 1 rasher, 20g	650
2 sweet biscuits	100 - 150	egg, 1 large	70
Piece of cake	150 - 200	cheese, 1 slice 30g	200
1 scone, small	300	Cheese, reduced salt, 30g	90
Sports drink 500mL	200	Ricotta 30g	60
Cup of soup, 1	650	Glass of milk	100
Tomato sauce, 20mL	200	Small tub yoghurt	120
Mayonnaise/dressing 20ml	250	Butter/marg 1 teaspoon	60
Sausage roll, average 80g	600	Butter/marg no added salt 1tsp	10
Meat pie, 1	900	Unsalted nuts 50g	5
Chicken nuggets 6	630	Baked beans ½ cup	570
Hamburger, average	1000	Tinned fish in brine 100g	300 - 400
Sausage, 1 thick	650	2-3 pinches salt (1g per pinch)	1500
Pizza, ¼ medium	1200	<i>Berocca</i> , 1 tablet	285