

Reducing Salt in Children & Adolescents

Many of us consume more salt than we need. Salt (sodium) is essential for good health, but the amount we need is very small and is naturally present in fresh foods. Our kidneys control the level of salt in our blood. Eating too much salt can cause the kidneys to work harder and can increase blood pressure, increase thirst and lead to excess fluid.

Your child is required to follow a Reduced Salt diet. Salt is naturally present in small amounts in fresh foods. Processed and packaged foods account for around three quarters of salt in the Australian diet.

To reduce salt intake:

- ✓ Always think - 'Fresh is Best' when deciding what foods to buy
- ✓ Don't add salt to food during cooking or at the dinner table
- ✓ Use herbs and spices in cooking instead of salt
- ✓ Avoid very salty food
- ✓ Read food labels – choose 'reduced salt' or 'no-added-salt' products

How to read food labels:

1. Find the 100g column
2. Find sodium (salt)
3. **Best** choice: less than 120mg
4. **Good** choice: 120 - 600mg
5. **Poor** choice: greater than 600mg

Choose lower salt foods

Breakfasts low in salt	
<p>Cereals</p> <p>Porridge, muesli, puffed rice/wheat, Weet-Bix™, Just Right™, Cherrios™, Sultana Bran™, (check the labels to find other lower salt cereals in the supermarket).</p>	
Lunches low in salt	
<p>Bread is surprisingly high in salt which can add up in the day.</p> <p>Bread or substitutes to use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rice Cakes or Corn Thins ○ Lebanese bread ○ Corn tortillas ○ Gluten free breads 	<p>Sandwich fillings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fresh meats - choose sliced roast chicken, lamb, beef or turkey breast ○ Egg ○ Tuna/salmon in oil or spring water ○ 'No added salt' baked beans ○ Jam or honey ○ 'No added salt' peanut butter ○ Salad ○ Lower salt cheeses such as ricotta, cream cheese, swiss cheese, mozzarella
Snacks for home and the lunchbox lower in salt	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Milk– flavoured or as fresh fruit smoothie ○ Yoghurt – fruit or plain ○ Boiled egg ○ Nuts with no added salt (for children over 5 years of age) ○ Frozen fruit iceblocks ○ Fruit – fresh, dried or tinned ○ Salad veg to crunch on – celery, carrot, cucumber and cherry tomatoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cereal Bars ○ Pikelets ○ Low-salt crackers – Vita-Weat™, rice cakes (plain), corn thins, rice crackers (plain), water crackers ○ 2-minute noodles without flavour sachet ○ Popcorn (no added salt)

Dinners lower in salt

Flavouring:

Use pepper, onion, herbs and spices, lemon juice, basil, oregano, thyme, chilli, curry powder

Sauces:

- Use reduced salt tomato sauce, BBQ sauce, tomato paste and canned tomatoes
- Choose reduced salt soy/oyster/fish sauce (ensuring the amount used is minimised, as this product still contains a lot of salt)
- Choose reduced salt liquid stock and cubes

Lower salt take-away:

- Hamburgers from the Take-away shop
- Fish & chips – deep fried or grilled (ensure you ask for no salt)
- BBQ chicken with a cob of corn plus salad
- Wraps with chicken breast/roast beef and salad

Remember pies, sausage rolls, chicken nuggets, shop pizzas are all high salt.

Limit take-away foods to once per week due to the high salt content.

Always ask for “No salt, please!”

Cook:

- ✓ Fresh meat, chicken and fish
- ✓ Fresh or frozen vegetables
- ✓ ‘No added salt’ canned vegetables
- ✓ Home-made soup (with low-salt stock)
- ✓ Pasta: avoid pasta in packets with flavouring and use reduced salt bottled sauces
- ✓ Rice: avoid rice in packets with flavouring
- ✓ Nachos with red kidney beans, fresh vegetables, mince, toasted/oven baked tortilla

Make your own pizzas:

- Halve the cheese
- Use fresh meats – mince, chicken
- Top with lots of fresh veg like tomato, mushroom & capsicum
- Add flavour with herbs like oregano, basil, garlic & pepper

Things I can do to reduce my salt intake:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Dietitian contact details:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____