

Media statement

6 March 2019

It's time for Action on Salt!

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) dietitians are calling for locals to pass on the salt, and add less salt while cooking or when at the table, as part of World Salt Awareness Week (4 – 10 March).

The average sodium intake of Australians is 3600 mg per day—almost double the national dietary recommendations and equivalent to almost two teaspoons a day.

SCHHS dietitian Rachael Smalley says salt is the silent killer of a modern diet.

“Almost two in three Australians reported that they add salt very often or occasionally either during meal preparations or at the table,” Ms Smalley said.

“We know that too much salt in our diet has been associated with increased chronic disease risk, particularly with regards to high blood pressure. High blood pressure can increase the risk of developing heart and kidney problems.

“For many Australians up to 80 per cent of the salt we eat comes from salt already present in processed, packaged foods like bread, breakfast cereals and sauces as well as food from restaurants and cafeterias,” Ms Smalley said.

World Salt Awareness Week is a great opportunity to shine the light on the hidden salt in our favourite food products and encourage everyone to be aware of our salt intake.

“A few tips for reducing salt intake is to check product labels on food. Food with less than 400mg per 100g are good choices, and food with less than 120mg per serve are best.

“Other ways to reduce the amount of salt in your diet is to eat less processed foods and include a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, plain meat, poultry, fish, unsalted nuts, legumes, lentils and dairy to your diet. Instead of adding salt to cooking, try using herbs and spices to flavour food. Cutting down your salt intake over a few months allows your taste buds to adjust,” Ms Smalley said.

SCHHS dietitians provide education to patients on salt intake on an individual basis within the acute care and outpatient services.

Salt education is also included within the Cardiac Rehabilitation group which is run within the Community Health and Renal Patient Information group education sessions.

ENDS

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