

HOW MUCH SODIUM IS IN YOUR FOOD?



Sodium Facts

Most of us eat **too much sodium** and that can be **dangerous for our health**.

Eating too much sodium can **raise your blood pressure**. High blood pressure can increase your risk of heart disease, stroke, vision loss and kidney disease, which may require dialysis.

Most of the sodium we eat is in **packaged, processed and restaurant foods**.

Let's find out how much sodium is in common foods we eat!

How much sodium should you eat in a day?

1,150

milligrams

(½ teaspoon)

2,300

milligrams

(1 teaspoon)

6,900

milligrams

(1 tablespoon)

ANSWER

2,300
milligrams!

You should eat no more than 2,300 milligrams* (mg) of sodium per day. Most people eat more sodium than this and don't know it because foods high in sodium don't always taste salty. Packaged, processed and restaurant foods are often high in sodium.

2,300 = **1 TEASPOON**
mg of sodium of salt

**When reading a Nutrition Facts label, you'll see sodium listed in milligrams (mg).*

Which of these foods has more sodium?

Corn Tortilla



vs.

Flour Tortilla



ANSWER

Flour Tortilla!



- Foods can have a lot of sodium without tasting salty.
- Two similar items can have very different levels of sodium.



Try this

- ✓ **Don't rely on taste.**
- ✓ **Check the Nutrition Facts label** to see how much sodium your packaged foods contain.
- ✓ Choose the option with the **least amount of sodium.**
- ✓ Limit how much of the item you eat.

Which of these foods has more sodium?

Plain brown rice



VS.

Seasoned brown rice



ANSWER

Seasoned Rice!



- Many times, the flavor packets that come with seasoned rice are high in sodium.



Try this

- ✓ Cook plain brown rice and season it to taste.
- ✓ **Boost flavor** by adding garlic, onion, herbs and spices to your foods.
- ✓ Sprinkle **vinegar or citrus** on foods just before eating.

Which of these foods has more sodium?

Canned Vegetables



VS.

Frozen Vegetables



ANSWER

Canned Vegetables!



- Canned vegetables can have as much as 650 mg of sodium per serving.



Try this

- ✓ **Drain and rinse** canned vegetables to reduce sodium.
- ✓ Look for **low-salt or no-salt** options.
- ✓ **Choose frozen or fresh vegetables instead.**
- ✓ Choose frozen vegetables that do not come with a pre-made sauce – **sauces are often high in sodium.**

Which of these foods has more sodium?

Lean Deli Turkey



Roasted Turkey



VS.

ANSWER

Lean Deli Turkey!



- Processed meats can be very high in sodium.
- Even products labeled as lean, healthy or natural may have a lot of sodium.



Try this

- ✓ **Use more fresh ingredients** when preparing meals at home.
- ✓ **Use less salt** while you cook and **add salt to taste at the table** instead.
- ✓ **Boost flavor** by adding garlic, onion, herbs and spices to your foods.
- ✓ Sprinkle **vinegar or citrus** on foods just before eating.

Which restaurant meal has more sodium?

Baked Cod



VS.

Southwest Grilled Chicken Salad
with Regular Dressing



ANSWER


Southwest Grilled Chicken Salad!



- The southwest grilled chicken salad has **3,550 mg** of sodium. That's well above the maximum amount of sodium you should eat in a full day!
- The baked cod has **1,200 mg** of sodium. That is still a lot of sodium for one meal.



Try this

- ✓ Look for the sodium warning icons  on menus in chain restaurants. It means a dish has 2,300 mg or more of sodium. **Avoid these dishes.**
- ✓ Ask for dressings and sauces, like soy sauce, **on the side** and look for **low sodium versions**.
- ✓ When possible, **cook more fresh meals at home** where you can control the amount of sodium in your food.

Find the sodium by reading food labels

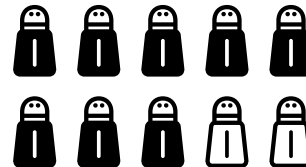
Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size 1 cup (237 g)		
Servings Per Container about 2		
Amount Per Serving		
Calories	100	Calories from Fat 20
% Daily Value*		
Total Fat	2.5g	4%
Saturated Fat	0.5g	3%
Trans Fat	0g	
Unsaturated Fat	0.5g	
Cholesterol	25mg	8%
Sodium	950mg	40%
Total Carbohydrate	12mg	4%
Dietary Fiber	1g	4%
Vitamin A	20%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium	2%	Iron 4%

- ✓ Always read the Nutrition Facts label to find products with less sodium.
- ✓ Remember to check the number of servings per container as well. The container may have more than one portion.
- ✓ Look for items that have 5% or less of the Daily Value (DV) of sodium per serving.

This can of soup has too much sodium!



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Choose less processed foods more often.

Eating less processed foods usually means less sodium in your diet.




Most Processed
Least Healthy



Least Processed
Most Healthy

Tips to reduce the amount of sodium in your diet:

- ✓ Eat less than **2,300 mg of sodium a day**.
- ✓ Check the **Nutrition Facts label** on all packaged foods. Choose the product with **less than 5%** daily value of sodium per serving.
- ✓ **Prepare more meals at home** using less processed foods. Fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables.
- ✓ Look for the **sodium warning icons**  on menus in chain restaurants in New York City. The icon tells you if a dish has 2,300 mg or more of sodium.
- ✓ **Use less salt while you cook.** Flavor food with herbs, spices, citrus, vinegar or vegetables instead.

Take these small steps to reduce the amount of sodium you eat and stay on the path to a healthier life!