

Basics on Reducing Sodium

The Role of Sodium

Sodium is an essential nutrient in the body. It has several roles, including:

- Maintaining blood volume
- Regulating water balance in cells
- Muscle and nerve function

Background

About 9 in 10 children ages 2-18 consume too much sodium.¹ The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans has set a daily sodium level ranging from 1500-2300 mg per day.² However, the average American consumes 3400 mg of sodium per day.³ While required in small amounts, too much sodium consumption can lead to hypertension, which can further increase the risk of developing heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease.

Common Sources of Sodium Food List

- Poultry
- Soups
- Bread and Rolls
- Cold Cuts and Cured Meats
- Pizza
- Cheese
- Sandwiches
- Pasta Dishes
- Chips
- Cookies

High Sodium Condiments

- Salt, Table
- Soy Sauce
- Teriyaki Sauce
- Barbeque Sauce
- Gravy
- Ranch Dressing
- Ketchup
- Hot Sauces

Sodium Reduction-Quick Tips

1. Use of herbs and spices—have flavor stations for students to experiment with various seasoning and spices (without salt) that sound good to them.
2. Use fresh foods over processed foods. If possible, cook recipes from scratch to further limit sodium content.
3. Compare nutrition facts labels—often times there may be a low sodium alternative. As a benchmark, low sodium is considered 140 mg or less per serving.⁴
4. Be aware of items that are “pickled,” “cured,” or “brined” – these products tend to be high in sodium.

Food

Seasoning/Spice

Beef	Garlic, mustard, thyme, coriander, cumin, lavender, oregano, turmeric, bay leaf, cayenne, chilli, curry, dill, mustard, paprika, marjoram, oregano, parsley rosemary, thyme
Poultry	Caraway, cinnamon, coriander, garlic, ginger, lemongrass, mustard, nutmeg, oregano, paprika, parsley, pepper, rosemary, sage, savory, tarragon, thyme, turmeric, allspice, anise, bay leaf, cayenne, curry, dill, marjoram
Pork	Allspice, basil, cardamom, caraway, cloves, coriander, curry, garlic, ginger, lavender, lemongrass, marjoram, mustard, nutmeg, oregano, paprika, parsley, rosemary, sage, savory thyme
Fish	Allspice, anise, basil, bay leaf, cayenne, chives, curry, dill, fennel, ginger, lemongrass, marjoram, mustard, nutmeg, oregano, paprika, parsley, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme, turmeric
Lamb	Basil, cardamom, curry, dill, garlic, lavender, mace, marjoram, mint, nutmeg, oregano, paprika, rosemary, turmeric
Broccoli	Basil, mustard, nutmeg, sage
Carrots	Basil, dill, mint, nutmeg, parsley, rosemary, thyme
Peas	Marjoram, mint, parsley, rosemary
Potatoes	Caraway, cilantro, chives, coriander, cumin, dill, fennel, garlic, lavender, mace, mint, nutmeg, oregano, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme
Squash	Cardamom, clove, cumin, ginger, nutmeg, oregano, rosemary
Eggplant	Cumin, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, thyme, turmeric
Cucumbers	Basil, cilantro, dill, mint, parsley
Tomatoes	Allspice, basil, caraway, cloves, cumin, dill, fennel, garlic, marjoram, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme
Onion	Coriander, nutmeg, thyme

Food

Seasoning/Spice

Bell Peppers	Basil, cilantro, oregano, rosemary
Zucchini	Basil, chives, dill, garlic, oregano, parsley, tarragon
Cauliflower	Oregano, parsley
Beans	Cumin, mint, oregano, rosemary, sage, thyme, turmeric
Asparagus	Dill, mint, sage
Spinach	Nutmeg, garlic, parsley, turmeric
Lentils	Coriander, cumin, parsley, rosemary, turmeric
Rice	Basil, cilantro, cinnamon, cumin, dill, parsley, turmeric
Corn	Basil, cilantro, oregano, parsley, thyme
Green Beans	Dill, marjoram, nutmeg, oregano, parsley
Sweet Potato	Cardamom, cinnamon, clove, nutmeg

References

1. CDC. CDC [Vital Signs - Reducing Sodium in Children's Diets](#). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Published September 5, 2018. Accessed June 9, 2021.
2. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. :164.
3. Nutrition C for FS and A. [Sodium in Your Diet](#). FDA. Published online June 8, 2021. Accessed June 9, 2021.
4. [How Much Sodium I Eat Per Day?](#) www.heart.org. Accessed June 9, 2021.
5. Food herb & spice pairing chart. :4.
6. [Herbs and Spices - What Goes With What Food](#) | Cooperative Extension | University of Delaware. Accessed June 28, 2021.

Links Used in This Document:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/children-sodium/index.html>

<https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-education-resources-materials/sodium-yourdiet>

<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/sodium/how-much-sodium-should-i-eat-per-day>

<https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/canr/cooperative-extension/fact-sheets/herbs-spices-on-food/>