



# SODIUM RESTRICTED DIETS

---

*ALL THE BASICS ON SODIUM, PLUS HELPFUL TIPS  
FOR REDUCING SODIUM IN YOUR DIET*

***Kendra Smith***

# BEGINNING WITH THE BASICS

## WHAT IS SODIUM?

Sodium is a mineral that is naturally occurring in foods. It can also be added to foods.

## WHAT IS SALT?

Table salt is a combination of 40% sodium, and 60% chloride. 90% of the sodium we eat is in the form of sodium chloride.

## SALT AND SODIUM CORRELATION

### Sodium in Table Salt

¼ tsp salt = 575 mg sodium

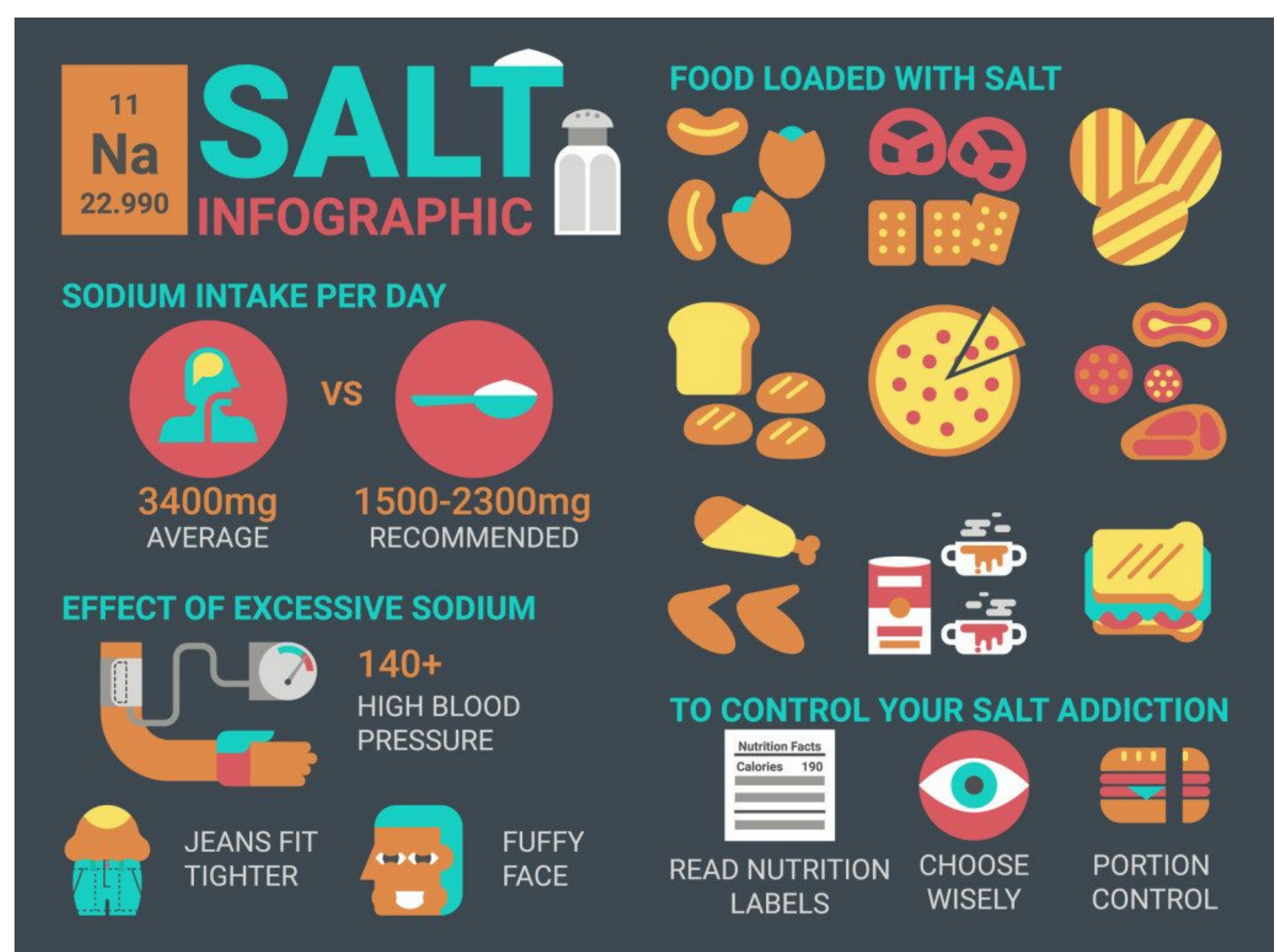
½ tsp salt = 1,150 mg sodium

¾ tsp salt = 1,725 mg sodium

1 tsp salt = 2,300 mg sodium

[todaysdietitian.com](http://todaysdietitian.com)

## WHERE MAJORITY OF SODIUM IS FOUND



[vectorstock.com](http://vectorstock.com)

## INTO PERSPECTIVE...

The majority of Americans' daily sodium intake comes from grains, meats, poultry, soups, and sandwiches. 70% of the sodium Americans consume is found in processed foods and restaurant meals. You may not be able to taste the salt in grains, baked goods, and meats, but they add up to major sources of daily sodium because of the frequency in which they are eaten.

# CDC AND HHS RECOMMENDATIONS

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provides national standards for sodium intake. The 2015-2020 Guidelines for Americans (provided by the CDC, recommends that Americans ***consume less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium per day*** as part of a healthy eating pattern.

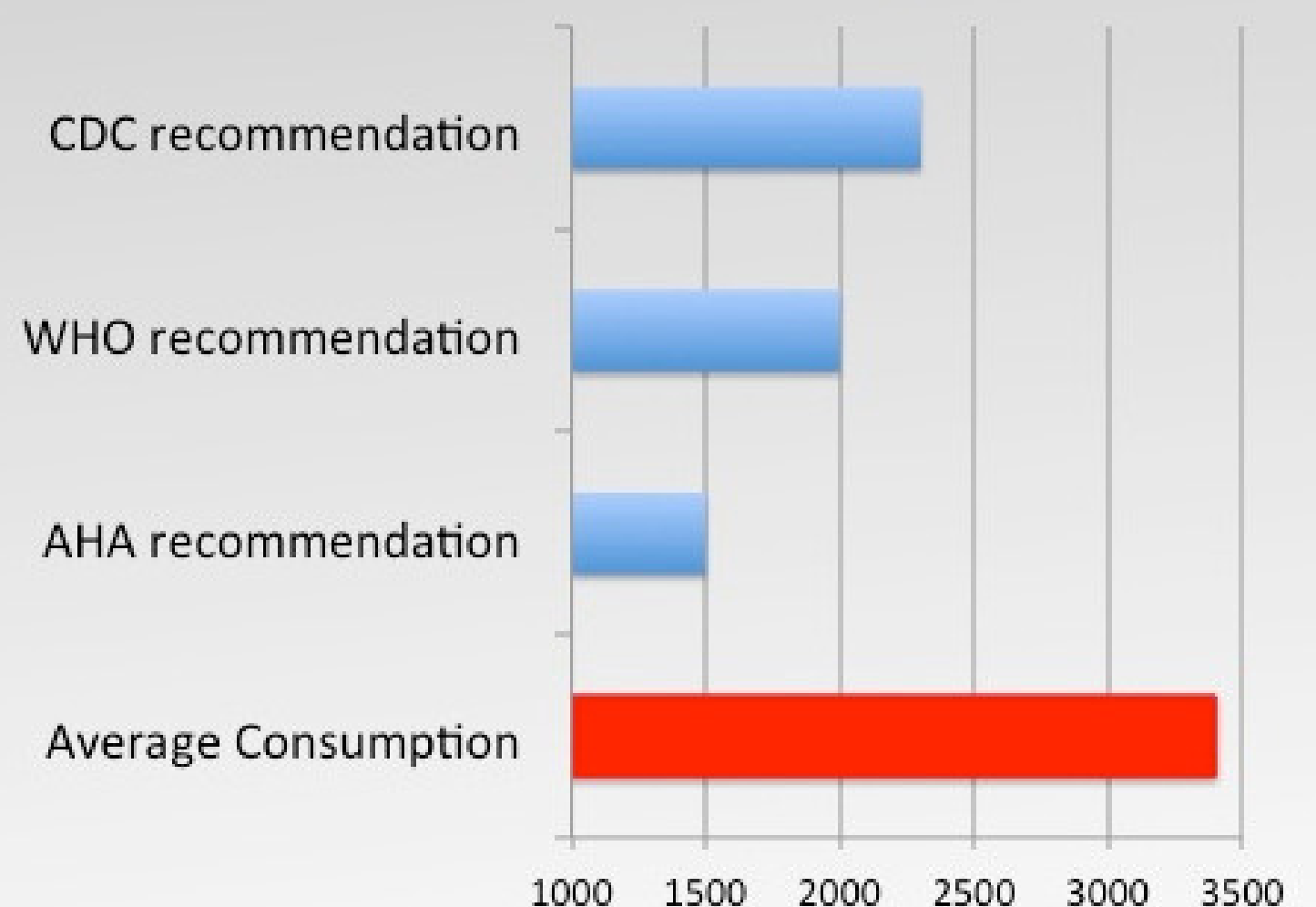
## The American Heart Association

*"When there's extra sodium in your bloodstream, it pulls water into your blood vessels, increasing the total amount of blood inside your blood vessels. With more blood flowing through your vessels, blood pressure **INCREASES**"*

- High blood pressure increases the chance of developing heart disease or having a stroke

### America Loves Salt

Sodium **ideal** vs **reality** (mg per day)



fooducate.com



drashchiheart.com

***THE IDEAL LIMIT IS 1,500  
MG OF SODIUM PER DAY***

(less for those with high blood pressure)



# IDENTIFYING LOW SODIUM FOODS

The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion recommends when grocery shopping to choose fresh food rather than processed foods when available. Use the "Nutrition Facts" label to check the sodium level. You can then compare sodium levels in like foods to find products with less sodium. You can also look for foods with "low sodium" or "no salt added" labels on the front of the packaging.



[healthyheartmarket.com](http://healthyheartmarket.com)

## WHAT A LOW SODIUM DIET CONSISTS OF:

### ***Vegetables and Fruits!***

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Frozen vegetables without any added sauces or butter
- Canned vegetables that are low in sodium or have no salt added (Check the labels! You can also rinse the vegetables to remove some of the sodium)
- Low sodium vegetable juice and fruit juice
- Frozen, canned, or dried fruit with no added sugars

### ***Condiments!***

- Unsalted margarine
- Low-sodium ketchup, salsa

### ***Breads, Cereals, and Other Grains!***

- Whole grains (brown or wild rice, quinoa, barley)
- Whole wheat or whole grain pasta
- Couscous
- Unsalted popcorn
- Low sodium chips/pretzels

### ***Dairy!***

- Low-fat or fat-free milk
- Low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
- Low-sodium or reduced sodium cheese
- Soymilk

### ***Protein!***

- Fresh or frozen fish/shellfish
- Chicken or turkey without skin or marinade
- Lean cuts of beef or pork
- Unsalted nuts or seeds
- Dried beans and peas
- Canned beans labeled "low-sodium" or "no salt added"
- Eggs

# PLANNING A LOW SODIUM DIET

## WHY SODIUM IS USED

Salt is used to add flavor to foods. Large amounts of salt are added into food while it is being prepared. Especially in restaurants. The salt typically dissipates slightly during the cooking process and the flavor is not as strong. Generally, more salt is added to get the desired flavor. You can taste salt more (and consume less) by adding it on top of cooked foods.

## SODIUM ALTERNATIVES

- Herbs (Basil, Dill, Parsley, Thyme, Oregano, etc.)
- Spices (Ginger, Cinnamon, Bay Leaves Cumin, Chili Powder, etc.)
- Salt-free seasoning blends
- Chopped vegetables (onion, celery, garlic, peppers)
- Lemon juice and lime juice
- Ginger



- 5% added while cooking
- 6% added while eating
- 12% from natural sources
- 77% from processed and prepared foods

[squarepegs.typepad.com](http://squarepegs.typepad.com)

The serving size represents the typical amount eaten by an adult.

### Example Nutrition Label

The sodium content is listed on the food label per serving size. Ignore the % daily value and focus on the amount of mg sodium per serving. Remember, if you eat more than one serving, you will get more sodium than the amount listed.

“Low sodium” = 140 mg or less per serving

“No sodium” = less than 5 mg per serving

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size		1 cup (228 g)	
Servings per container:		2	
Amount Per Serving			
Calories		90	
Fat Calories		30	
			% Daily Value*
Total Fat	3g		5%
Saturated Fat	0g		0%
Trans Fat	0g		
Cholesterol	0mg		0%
Sodium	300mg		13%
Total Carbohydrate	13g		4%
Dietary Fiber	3g		12%
Sugars	3g		
Protein	3g		
Vitamin A	80%	Vitamin C	60%
Calcium	4%	Iron	4%
*Percent Daily Values (DV) are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower, depending on your calorie needs.			



# SAMPLE MENU: LOW SODIUM

## BREAKFAST

- 1/2 Grapefruit (0mg)
- 4 medium, Low-sodium pancakes (150mg)
- 2 Tbsp Syrup (0mg)
- 8 oz. Skim Milk (95mg)
- Coffee (0mg)

## MORNING SNACK

- 1 c Pineapple Chunks (0mg)

## LUNCH

- 2oz Grilled Chicken (60mg)
- 1 (thin) slice Whole Wheat bread (70mg)
- 1 tsp Margarine (30mg)
- Homemade Macaroni Salad (140mg)
- 1 c. Mixed Vegetables (20mg)
- Diet Soda (40mg)

## AFTERNOON SNACK

- 2 cookies (110mg)

## DINNER

- 2 c Spaghetti (no salt) (5mg)
- Low-sodium sauce (80mg)
- 1 thin slice French bread (165mg)
- 2 tsp Margarine (30mg)
- 1 c Broccoli (65mg)
- 2 c Salad w/low-sodium dressing (175mg)
- 4 oz Skim Milk (47.5mg)

## EVENING SNACK

- 1 slice Angel Food Cake with 1/2 c Strawberries (110mg)

TOTAL FOR DAY=  
1392.5MG  
SODIUM

# WHAT NOW?

Now the basis of low-sodium diets are outlined, you can begin your own low sodium diet. Consulting a [Registered Dietitian](#) is highly recommended. The dietitian can help guide and support you as well as work alongside you to develop a meal plan based on your calorie needs.



**American  
Heart  
Association®**

The [American Heart Association](#) and the [Center for Disease Control](#) will also give credible information about sodium in your diet



[choosemyplate.gov](#) also provides credible guidance regarding sodium in your food

Low-sodium diets help your overall health and will leave you feeling better. Having too much sodium in your diet causes your body to retain too much water, worsening the fluid that builds up with heart failure. By following a low-sodium diet, it helps keep blood pressure and swelling under control. If you have heart failure, it can also make breathing easier!

For more ideas for menus, you can check out this website:  
<https://www.allinahealth.org/health-conditions-and-treatments/health-library/patient-education/heart-failure/diet-and-nutrition/low-sodium-sample-menu-plans-for-one-week/>

Always check your food labels to see what you are putting inside your body. If possible, prepare your meals as often as you can so you can ensure what is entering your body. [Fresh foods are always better than processed foods!](#)

## Bibliography

<https://sodiumbreakup.heart.org/salt-vs-sodium>

[https://www.heart.org/-/media/data-import/downloadables/pe-abh-why-should-i-limit-sodium-ucm\\_300625.pdf](https://www.heart.org/-/media/data-import/downloadables/pe-abh-why-should-i-limit-sodium-ucm_300625.pdf)

<https://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/heart-health/low-sodium-foods-shopping-list>

[https://www.cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/sodium\\_dietary\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/sodium_dietary_guidelines.pdf)

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/sodium>

<https://www.allinahealth.org/health-conditions-and-treatments/health-library/patient-education/heart-failure/diet-and-nutrition/low-sodium-sample-menu-plans-for-one-week/>

<https://www.healthline.com/health/hyponatremia#risk-factors>