

Your Heart and Sodium (Salt) Restriction



A Guide for Patients

When you have heart failure or high blood pressure, it is important to reduce the amount of sodium (salt) that you eat.

- Sodium causes extra fluid to build up in your body.
- This extra fluid makes your heart work harder and can cause symptoms such as swelling of the feet or abdomen, shortness of breath or weight gain.

What is sodium?

Sodium is a mineral found in salt.

**1 teaspoon of salt =
approximately
2300 mg of sodium**

What is a "low sodium" diet?

It is best to limit the amount of sodium you eat to 2000 mg or less per day from all food sources. This will help you prevent fluid build up in the body.

Ask your healthcare professional how much sodium is right for you.

Please visit the UHN Patient Education website for more health information:

www.uhnpatienteducation.ca

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Created: 05/2011

Form: D-5759

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Tips to reduce sodium in your diet:

1. Avoid using salt in cooking and remove the salt shaker from your table.
2. Avoid canned soups and processed foods.
3. Avoid salted snack foods, such as chips, crackers and nuts.
4. Avoid pickles, pickled foods, relishes, salsa, soya sauce, sauerkraut and olives.
5. Avoid processed foods such as:
 - Canned or packaged soups
 - “Instant” foods as soups, oatmeal, or puddings
 - Processed cheese slices and spreads
 - Processed, cured or smoked meats such as sausage wieners, ham, bacon, smoked fish
 - Canned vegetables, meat and fish
 - Canned tomato and vegetable juices
 - Frozen dinners and entrees
6. Buy fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats and try to prepare your meals at home.
7. Eat out less often. Look for restaurants that offer low sodium choices and avoid fast food restaurants.
8. Season foods with lemon juice, vinegars, fresh garlic, herbs and spices.
 - Do not use spices that contain salt or sodium, such as garlic salt or onion salt
 - Avoid using salt substitutes as “No Salt”™ or “Half Salt”™
 - You may choose seasonings blends such as “Mrs. Dash”™ or President’s Choice “No salt added seasoning blend”™
9. Choose foods labelled “low sodium” or “no salt added.”
10. Read food labels to find out how much sodium is in that food.



3 Steps to help you understand food labels:

Nutrition Facts	
Per 9 crackers (23 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 90	
Fat 4.5 g	7 %
Saturated 2.5 g + Trans 0 g	13 %
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 275 mg	12 %
Carbohydrate 12 g	4 %
Fibre 1 g	4 %
Sugars 0 g	
Protein 3 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 2 %	Calcium 8 %

Step 1:

Check serving size. It may only be a portion of the total container. For example: The serving size is 9 crackers only. If you are eating same sized portion as listed on the label, you are eating the same amount of nutrients listed.

Step 2:

Look at the amount of Sodium in mg per serving. Try to choose products with less than 100 mg per serving or 5% or less of the Daily Value (DV) per serving.

Step 3:

Check the ingredient list for words such as: salt, sea salt, sodium, monosodium

Health Canada, 2010

glutamate (MSG), brine, sodium nitrite, sodium propionate, baking soda or baking powder.

How much sodium is in the food you eat?

This chart shows the amount of sodium in a normal serving size of some popular foods:

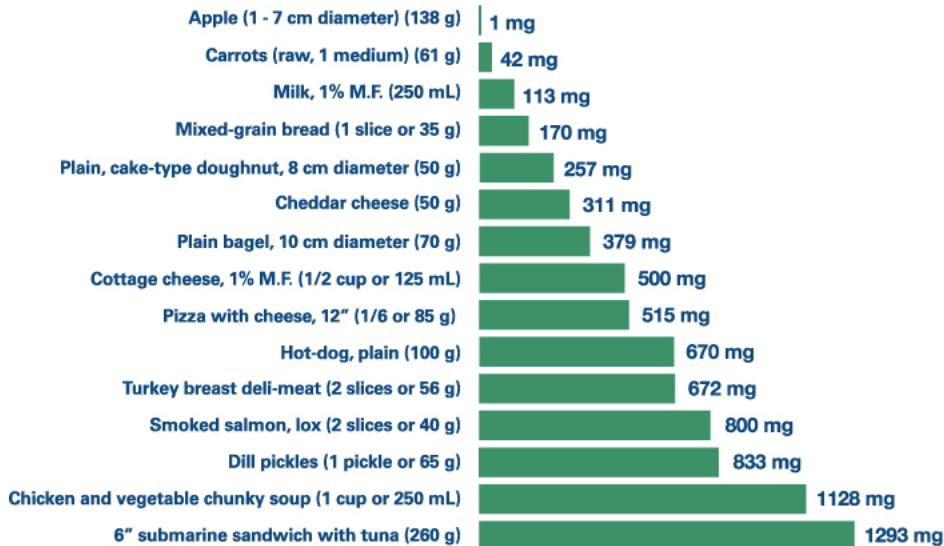


Chart adapted from "Putting Sodium into Perspective", PepsiCo Canada.

Helpful Websites:

www.abouthf.org

www.uhnpatienteducation.ca

www.heartandstroke.on.ca

www.eatrightontario.ca

About The Peter Munk Cardiac Centre

For more information about heart and circulation conditions, a glossary of terms, maps, information about our location and how to be referred, please visit www.petermunkcardiaccentre.ca