



American Heart Association

The American Heart Association recommends foods with little or no salt to reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases. Aim to eat less than 1,500 mg. of sodium per day.

We know sodium is an acquired taste. As you take steps to reduce sodium, you'll actually start to appreciate foods for their true flavor. In time, you'll look forward to how food really tastes — not just the salty flavor.

Tips for Reducing Sodium in the Diet

- Read the Nutrition Facts label to compare and find foods lower in sodium. You'll be surprised to find that even foods in the same category have different amounts of sodium!
- Choose fresh fruits and vegetables, when possible.
- Limit the amount of processed foods you eat and your portion size.
- Avoid adding salt when cooking and/or eating.
- Learn to use spices and herbs to enhance the taste of your food. Most spices naturally contain very small amounts of sodium, but read the label to be sure.
- Add fresh lemon juice instead of salt to fish and vegetables.
- Specify how you want your food prepared when dining out. Ask for your dish to be prepared without salt.
- Take control of what's in your food by cooking more at home.
- Choose foods with potassium. They counter the effects of sodium and may help lower your blood pressure.

Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations

Eat a variety of nutritious foods from all the food groups.

- Vegetables and fruits are high in vitamins, minerals and fiber — and they're low in calories. Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables may help you control your weight and your blood pressure.
- Unrefined whole-grain foods contain fiber that can help lower your blood cholesterol and help you feel full, which may help you manage your weight.
- Eat fish at least twice a week. Recent research shows that eating oily fish containing omega-3 fatty acids (for example, salmon, trout, and herring) may help lower your risk of death from coronary artery disease.

Eat less of the nutrient-poor foods. As you make daily food choices, base your eating pattern on these recommendations:

- Choose lean meats and poultry without skin and prepare them without added saturated and trans fat.
- Select fat-free, 1 percent fat, and low-fat dairy products.
- Cut back on foods containing partially hydrogenated vegetable oils to reduce trans fat in your diet.
- Cut back on foods high in dietary cholesterol. Aim to eat less than 300 milligrams of cholesterol each day.
- Cut back on beverages and foods with added sugars.
- Choose and prepare foods with little or no salt. Aim to eat less than 1,500 milligrams of sodium per day. Learn more about limiting sodium.
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. That means one drink per day if you're a woman and two drinks per day if you're a man.
- Follow the American Heart Association recommendations when you eat out, and keep an eye on your portion sizes.