Sodium

Your body needs a small amount of sodium to work properly, but too much sodium can be bad for your health. Diets higher in sodium are associated with an increased risk of developing high blood pressure, which is a major cause of stroke and heart disease.

The % Daily Value is the percentage of a nutrient in a serving of food, and it shows how much the nutrient contributes to a total daily diet.

- The salt we eat is called “sodium chloride.”
- When we look for salt on labels, we see it as “sodium.”

So how much sodium should I be eating?
The recommended Daily Value for sodium is less than 2,300 mg (milligrams) per day. That’s equal to about 1 teaspoon of salt!

Where does salt in our diet come from?

- 5% added during cooking
- 6% added at the table
- 12% naturally occurring
- 77% processed or prepared foods

EXAMPLE:
Two slices of thickcrust pizza with pepperoni add up to about 2,270 mg of sodium – almost the daily recommended sodium limit for adults and children 14 years and up!

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There are lots of different types of salt: table, kosher, sea, Himalayan, and more. To lower sodium in your diet, you need to cut down on ALL types of salt – especially foods that already have salt in them. Sodium is often used as a preservative. Even foods that don’t taste salty – like breads, tortillas, cheese, and condiments – can be high in sodium.

**Sneaky sources of sodium**
- Canned Vegetables
- Prepared Meats
- Sauces & Condiments
- Packaged Snacks
- Canned & Packaged Soups

**Tips to reduce sodium**

**SHAKE** it up! Instead of seasoning your food with salt, try out different herbs and spices.

**COOK** your own foods at home to reduce sodium. Try making your own snacks, sandwiches, and salad dressings!

**CHOOSE** low-sodium products at the store or food bank.

**RINSE** canned foods like beans, tuna, and vegetables to remove some of the sodium.

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