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Mrs. Dash® Sodium Facts*

How much salt is too much?

- The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that we eat no more than 2400 mg of sodium per day. Healthy children and adults need to consume only small amounts of salt to meet their sodium needs, about less than 1/4 teaspoon of salt daily.
- Salt contains sodium. Sodium is a substance that adversely affects blood pressure.

Where does salt come from?

While some foods naturally contain sodium, most of the sodium we consume is from salt (sodium chloride) added during cooking, at the table and during food processing. Popular high sodium food choices include pickled foods, canned vegetables and soups, snack foods, cured meats, packaged mixes and frozen dinners. Sodium also comes from ingredients like baking soda, baking powder, and MSG.

Remember, not all foods with added salt taste salty. Some people add salt or a salty seasoning to their food at the table. Your preference for salt may decrease if you gradually decrease the amount of salt or salty seasonings to your food.

What happens if I eat too much salt?

- **Too much salt in the diet can lead to high blood pressure. Many people can reduce their chances of developing high blood pressure by consuming less salt. Many studies in diverse populations have shown that a high sodium intake is associated with higher blood pressure.**

How can I determine how much salt is in the food I eat?

Read food labels:

Sodium free: less than 5mg sodium per serving

Very-low sodium: no more than 35mg sodium per serving

Low-sodium: no more than 140mg sodium per serving

Reduced sodium: contains at least 25% less sodium than the regular version of the food

No salt added: no salt may be added during processing

The best way to cut back on sodium is to cut back on salt and salty foods and seasonings.

Tips to shake the salt habit without sacrificing flavor:

- Reduce the amount of salt added to recipes. Start by using 25% less and gradually cut back more over time. When reducing salt in recipes, try using a no-salt seasoning such as Mrs. Dash® Salt-Free Seasoning Blends.
- Add acids such as a squeeze of lemon juice or splash of vinegar to vegetables, fish and soups to replicate the effect of salt.
- Cut back on the amount of salt and soy sauce used in marinades. Add flavor with herbs and spices, fruit juice, wine or flavored vinegars, or use a ready-made salt-free marinade such as Mrs. Dash® Salt Free 10-Minute Marinades.
- Choose fresh or frozen vegetables and add your own seasonings.
- Make your own rice dishes instead of using prepackaged mixes. Cook the rice in low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth, and add flavor with a splash of olive oil and some onion, mushrooms, celery and herbs.
- Reduce the salt content by draining and rinsing canned food items.

Sources

<http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2000/document/choose.htm#salt>

<http://www.fda.gov/fdac/foodlabel/sodium.html#guide>

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