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## **EXPERTS OFFER TIPS TO MEET NEW SODIUM GUIDELINES** **Simple Tips Can Cut Salt Intake Dramatically**

**Melrose Park, Ill. (Feb. 19, 2004)** – According to research released last week, Americans should be eating even less salt than we originally thought. The long-awaited report from the Institute of Medicine, an independent, not-for-profit organization that advises on essential health and medical issues, has recommended that Americans' daily amount of sodium intake be lowered from 2,400 milligrams (about one heaping teaspoon) to 1,500 milligrams per day.

In reality, most Americans consume more than 4,000 mg of salt a day – much of it hidden in processed foods or added when cooking home-made foods. Too much sodium can lead to serious health problems such as high blood pressure, stroke and heart failure.

But low-sodium doesn't have to mean less taste. Tracey Carlyle, a registered dietitian, offers the following simple tips to enjoy tasty, healthy meals:

- **Keep it Fresh** – Enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables in abundance – they're always low in sodium.
- **Switch the Shaker** – The American Heart Association says taking the salt shaker off the table can reduce the average person's salt intake by about 30 percent. Instead, replace your salt shaker with a salt-free alternative, like Mrs. Dash Table Blend.
- **Go "Low" or "No"** – Look for "low-salt" or "low-sodium" on the label – this label is not allowed on packages unless the food has 140 milligrams of sodium or less per serving.
- **Cut the fat, not the flavor** – Fat tastes good...that's why we like it! But it's also tempting to add salt to low-fat recipes to pump up the flavor. Instead, add salt-free seasonings, like Mrs. Dash (see recipe below).
- **Know what to look for on the label** – Many manufacturers offer reduced-sodium versions of their products, but labels can be confusing. The American Dietetic Association offers the following guidelines to help you interpret the various labels:
  - Sodium-Free: Contains 5 milligrams or less of sodium per serving
  - Very Low-Sodium: 35 milligrams or less of sodium per serving
  - Low-Sodium: 140 milligrams or less of sodium per serving
  - Reduced-Sodium: At least 25 percent less sodium than the original version of the product. Some reduced-sodium foods may still contain a significant amount of sodium. Use them sparingly.
  - No added salt or unsalted: No salt is added during processing, but this does not guarantee the product is sodium-free.

More than 400 low-sodium dishes, plus an offer for free samples a recipe booklet, are available on the Mrs. Dash Web site. Visit [www.mrsdash.com](http://www.mrsdash.com).

### **About Mrs. Dash**

Every one of the 12 Mrs. Dash® Seasoning Blends are a masterful blend containing 14 herbs and spices, with no salt and no MSG. Visit [www.mrsdash.com](http://www.mrsdash.com) to explore an interactive recipe database filled with more than 400 low-sodium dishes designed to help Americans eat a healthy, delicious meal.

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