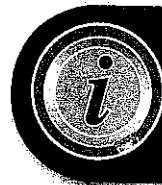


MODULE 2: NUTRIENTS TO GET LESS OF

BACKGROUND INFORMATION



PART 2

All About Sodium

1 Sodium is an essential nutrient and is needed by the human body in relatively small amounts (provided that substantial sweating does not occur). Sodium maintains a balance of body fluids, keeps muscles and nerves running smoothly, and helps certain organs work properly.

2 As a food ingredient, sodium has multiple uses, such as for curing meat, baking, thickening, retaining moisture, enhancing flavor (including the flavor of other ingredients, like making sweets taste sweeter), and as a preservative.

Salt and Sodium Defined

3 The words "salt" and "sodium" are often used interchangeably, but they do not mean the same thing. Salt (also known by its chemical name *sodium chloride*) is a crystal-like compound that is abundant in nature and is used to flavor and preserve food. Sodium is a mineral and one of the chemical elements found in salt.

4 *Most people in the U.S. eat too much salt. Salt contains sodium, and too much sodium can raise blood pressure – which can have serious health consequences if not treated.*

- The daily recommendation for sodium is less than 2,300 mg per day.
- The average daily intake of sodium for Americans 2 years and older is about 3,440 mg.
- The amount of sodium the body needs each day is 1,500 mg.

1 The **Nutrition Facts label** on food and beverage packages is a useful tool for making healthy dietary choices and monitoring how much sodium is in a food. Many restaurant websites also have nutrient information for their menu items.

2 FDA requires nutrition information about a food that has a nutrient claim, such as "low sodium." In addition, in the future, FDA will require certain nutrition information, including information on sodium, on standard menu items in many restaurants and similar retail food establishments.

3 Most of the sodium consumed by Americans comes from the following foods:

- Breads and rolls
- Pizza
- Sandwiches
- Cold cuts and cured meats
- Soups
- Burritos and tacos
- Savory snacks*
- Chicken
- Cheese
- Eggs and omelets

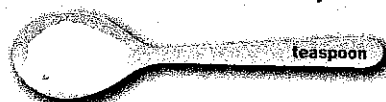
*Chips, popcorn, pretzels, snack mixes, and crackers

Salt

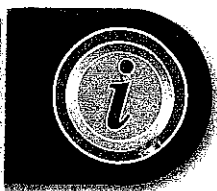
4 Salt is the main source of sodium for most people, but some common food additives – like monosodium glutamate (MSG), sodium bicarbonate (baking soda), sodium nitrite, and sodium benzoate – also contain sodium and contribute (in lesser amounts) to the total amount of "sodium" listed on the Nutrition Facts label.

1 Surprisingly, some foods that don't taste salty can still be high in sodium, so don't use taste as a guide. For example, while some foods that are high in sodium taste salty – like pickles and soy sauce – there are also many foods, like cereals and pastries, which contain sodium but don't taste salty. In addition, some foods that you may eat several times a day, such as breads, can add up to a lot of sodium even though an individual serving may not be high in sodium.

2 Sodium chloride or table salt is approximately 40% sodium. Understand just how much sodium is in salt so you can take measures to control your intake.



1 teaspoon salt = 2,300 mg sodium



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Check the Label!

3

High levels of sodium may seem “hidden” in packaged food, particularly when a food doesn’t “taste” salty – but sodium is not hidden on the Nutrition Facts label!

- The Nutrition Facts label lists the Percent Daily Value (%DV) of sodium in **one serving** of a food.
- The DV for sodium has been slightly lowered to 2,300 mg for the new Nutrition Facts label.
- Often, one package of food may contain more than one serving. So, if a package contains two servings and you eat the entire package, you have consumed twice the amount of sodium listed on the label (in other words, you’ve consumed double the %DV).

4

Use the Percent Daily Value (%DV) to compare sodium in different products. The %DV tells you whether a food contributes a little or a lot to your total daily diet.

- 5% DV or less of sodium per serving is low
- 20% DV or more of sodium per serving is high

1



2

The original label uses a DV of 2,400 mg for sodium, but the new label will use a DV of 2,300 mg for sodium. The %DV for sodium on any label is based on the DV, either 2,300 mg or 2,400 mg.

Check the Package for Nutrient Claims

You can also check the food package to quickly identify foods that may contain less sodium. For example, look for foods with claims such as:

3

Salt/Sodium-Free	Less than 5 mg of sodium per serving
Very Low Sodium	35 mg of sodium or less per serving
Low Sodium	140 mg of sodium or less per serving
Reduced Sodium	At least 25 percent less sodium than the regular product
Light in Sodium or Lightly Salted	At least 50 percent less sodium than the regular product
No-Salt-Added or Unsalted	No salt is added during processing – but beware, these products may not be salt/sodium-free unless stated

ALL READ

ALL READ

POTASSIUM HELPS!

Research shows that eating foods that are a good source of potassium can lower blood pressure by reducing the adverse effects of sodium on blood pressure. Examples of foods with more potassium include:

- bananas
- beet greens
- juices (carrot, pomegranate, prune, orange, and tomato)
- non-fat and low-fat yogurt
- potatoes
- spinach
- sweet potatoes
- tomatoes and tomato products
- white beans

POTASSIUM HELPS!

NUTRITION IN ACTION

Start the Shake-Down: Easy Tips for Cutting Sodium

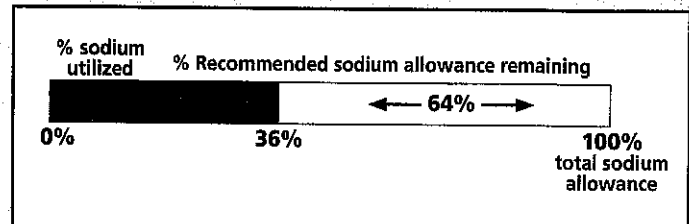
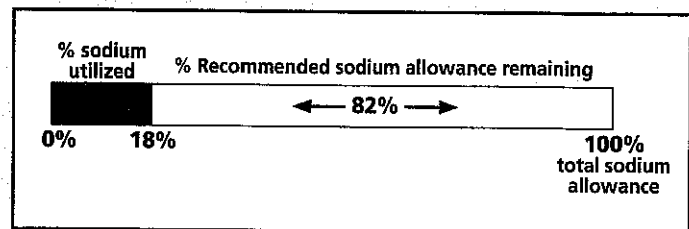
Learning about sodium in foods and exploring new ways to prepare foods will help you achieve your sodium goal. And, if you follow these tips for reducing the amount of sodium you are consuming, your "taste" for sodium will gradually decrease over time – so eventually, you may not even miss it!

1. Read the Nutrition Facts label to see how much sodium is in the foods you are considering. Most people should consume less than 100% of the Daily Value of sodium each day. Check the label for lower sodium choices and compare sodium in different brands of foods — like frozen meals, packaged soups, breads, dressings/sauces, and snack foods — and choose those with lower sodium.
2. Prepare your own food when you can. Limit the amount of salt you add to foods when cooking, baking, or at the table, and limit packaged sauces, mixes, and "instant" products, including flavored rice, instant noodles, and ready-made pasta.
3. Add flavor without adding sodium. Use no-salt seasoning blends and herbs and spices instead of salt to add flavor to your foods. Try rosemary, oregano, basil, curry powder, cayenne pepper, ginger, fresh garlic or garlic powder (not garlic salt), black or red pepper, vinegar or lemon juice, and no-salt seasoning blends.
4. Get fresh when you can. Buy fresh or frozen meat and poultry, rather than canned, smoked, or processed meat and poultry such as luncheon meats and sausages. Also, check the package on fresh meat and poultry to see if salt water or saline has been added.
5. Watch your veggies. Buy fresh, frozen (no sauce or seasoning), or low sodium or no-salt-added canned vegetables.
6. Give sodium the "rinse." Rinse sodium-containing canned foods, such as tuna, vegetables, and beans before eating. This removes some of the sodium.
7. "Unsalt" your snacks. Choose nuts, seeds, and snack products (such as chips and pretzels) that are marked "low sodium" or "no salt added" – or have carrot or celery sticks instead.
8. Consider your condiments. Sodium condiments can add up. Choose light or reduced sodium condiments, add oil and vinegar to salads rather than bottled dressings, and use only a small amount of seasoning from flavoring packets instead of the entire packet.
9. Make lower-sodium choices at restaurants. Ask for your meal to be prepared without salt and request that sauces and salad dressings be served "on the side," then use less of them. You can also reduce your portion size – less food means less sodium! For example, split an entrée with a dinner companion or ask the server to put half of your meal in a take out container before it comes to your table.

A Quick Guide to %DV

- 5% DV or less per serving is low for all nutrients, including those you want to limit (for example, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium), as well as those that you want to consume in greater amounts (e.g., fiber and calcium).
- 20% DV or more per serving is high for all nutrients.

Balancing daily needs example: If the label shows that the sodium in one serving is 18% DV, is that amount contributing a lot or a little to your recommended daily amount for sodium of 100% DV? What if you ate the whole package (i.e., two servings)? You would then double that amount, eating 36% of your recommended daily amount for sodium. That means you still should aim to get less than 64% of your recommended sodium ($100\% - 36\% = 64\%$) from all of the other foods you eat that day, snacks and drinks included.





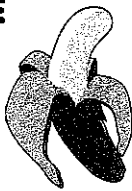




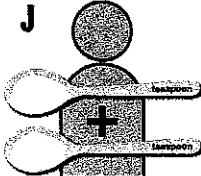




STUDENT WORKSHEET

SODIUM IN SNACK FOODS

Name _____ Date _____ Class/Hour _____

Do your best to match the milligrams of sodium on each bag to the picture of the snack food. Fill in the table below.

Milligrams of Sodium	Snack Food
1 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	A  Smoked Beef Stick (1 stick)
40 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	B  Vegetable Juice (8 ounces)
135 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	C  Pretzels (1 ounce)
190 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	D  Diet Soda (8 ounces)
270 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	E  Medium Banana (7 - 7.9 inches)
290 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	F  Regular Potato Chips (1.5 ounces)
480 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	G  Baked Potato Chips (1 ounce)
490 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	H  Sunflower Seeds (3 ounces)
677 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	I  Recommended Amount Per Day
1,500 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	J  Average American intake of Sodium
Less than 2,300 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	K  Large Fries (5.6 ounces)
About 3,440 mg <input type="checkbox"/>	L  Amount of Sodium Your Body Needs

1. What is sodium? _____
2. How much sodium does the body need in order to function each day? _____
3. What is the recommended daily limit for sodium? _____
4. What is the average daily intake of sodium by Americans over 2 years old? _____
5. How does a diet high in sodium contribute to heart disease? _____

6. How can you reduce sodium in your diet? _____

Optional Extension Activity

Snack Food	Calories	Sodium (Na)	Salt (NaCl)	Saturated Fat
Sunflower Seeds (3-ounce bag)				
Regular Potato Chips (1.5-ounce bag)				
Baked Potato Chips (1-ounce bag)				
Large Fries (5.6 ounces)				
Pretzels (1 ounce of thin, classic)				