

The quick guide to sodium (salt)

Information for patients and families

What is sodium?

Sodium is another word for salt. You need some sodium, but if you have too much sodium it can put you at risk for:

- High blood pressure
- Stroke
- Heart disease
- Kidney disease

How much sodium should I eat each day?

- Health Canada recommends eating less than 2300 milligrams of sodium per day.
- If you have high blood pressure, your doctor or dietitian may recommend that you eat to less than 2000 milligrams of sodium per day.

How can I reduce the amount of sodium I eat?

1. Use less salt in cooking.
2. Do not add salt at the table.
3. Limit processed and packaged foods because they are usually high in salt.

Tips...

- Instead of adding salt, try adding herbs and spices for flavour.
- Avoid eating foods that are very high in sodium, such as olives, pickles, chips, pretzels, processed cheese and processed meats (bologna and other luncheon meats).
- Choose low-sodium products more often. For example, choose fresh meats and cheeses because they are lower in sodium than processed meats and cheeses.
- See the tables on the next page to learn how much sodium is in the foods you eat.

Read the “Nutrition Facts” label on packaged foods

- Choose products that have less than 200 milligrams of sodium
- Limit foods that have between 200-400 milligrams of sodium
- Avoid foods that have more than 400 milligrams of sodium.

What if I am eating at a restaurant?

- Fast food restaurants and processed foods are usually high in salt.
- Ask restaurants for the nutrition information and read the food labels on packaged foods to find lower sodium options.

St. Michael's cares about your health. For reliable health information, visit our Patient and Family Learning Centre, Room 6-004, 6th floor, Cardinal Carter Wing, or find us online at www.stmichaelshospital.com/learn

This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Ask your healthcare provider about this information if you have questions.

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www.stmichaelshospital.com/programs/diabetes/
Booking Line: 416 867-3679

Sodium content of foods

	Serving size	mg		Serving size	mg
Cereal			Hard Cheese		
Shredded wheat	30g (½ cup)	2	Unsalted cheese	30g (1 ounce)	< 25
All Bran	30g (½ cup)	65	Swiss, regular	30g (1 ounce)	80
Shreddies	30g (½ cup)	190	Swiss, processed	30g (1 ounce)	390
Rice Krispies	30g (1¼ cup)	350	Mozzarella, regular	30g (1 ounce)	110
Cornflakes	¾ cup	210	Mozzarella, skim	30g (1 ounce)	130
Cream of wheat:			Havarti	30g (1 ounce)	150
▪ regular (no salt)	¾ cup	5	Cheddar, processed	30g (1 ounce)	380
▪ instant (no salt)	¾ cup	5	Cheddar, regular and light	30g (1 ounce)	180
▪ instant	¾ cup	200-240	Gouda	30g (1 ounce)	230
Muffins/Pancakes/Waffles			Provolone	30g (1 ounce)	250
Waffles	1 small	250	Blue	30g (1 ounce)	400
Pancakes	3-4 small	550-750	Parmesan	30g (1 ounce)	450
French toast	1 slice	260	Soft Cheese		
Muffins	1 muffin	50-250	Cottage cheese	½ cup	10
Crackers/Granola Bars			Cream cheese, reg	1 tablespoon	43
Low fat rice cakes	1 cake	5	Cream cheese, light	1 tablespoon	44
Melba toast	2 pieces	<30	Goat cheese	30g (1 ounce)	100
Unsalted crackers	6-8 crackers	<100	Ricotta	½ cup	100-150
Salted crackers	6-8 crackers	100-200	Brie	30g (1 ounce)	180
Granola/cereal bar	1 bar	50-110	Milk/Yogurt		
Breads/Rolls			Low sodium milk	250ml (1 cup)	5
Bagel	1 bagel	250-600	White/choc. milk	250ml (1 cup)	130-160
Bread	1 slice	120-180	Soy milk	250ml (1 cup)	30
Pita	1 pita	215	Buttermilk	250ml (1 cup)	270
Hamburger bun	1 bun	240	Milkshake	250ml (1 cup)	230
English muffin	1 muffin	360	Yogurt	½ cup	90
Rice/Pasta			Beverages		
White/brown rice	½ cup	5	Beer	1 ¼ cup	25
Flavoured rice	½ cup	300-500	Wine	¼ cup	< 5
Pasta noodles	1 cup	4	Tomato juice/ V8:		
Beans/Tofu			▪ regular	250ml (1 cup)	650-800
Tofu	1 cup	< 10	▪ low sodium	250ml (1 cup)	< 65
Beans:			Coffee, tea, soft drinks, fruit juice, etc.		
▪ canned	½ cup	200	250ml (1 cup)		
▪ dried	½ cup	< 10			
Peanut butter:			Soup		
▪ regular	2 tablespoons	160	Cup-a-Soup	250ml (1 cup)	600-680
▪ unsalted	2 tablespoons	5	Campbell's	250ml (1 cup)	800-980
Nuts:			Mr. Noodles	1 package	1700
▪ salted	8-10 nuts	220	Low sodium soups	250ml (1 cup)	< 100
▪ unsalted	8-10 nuts	5			

	Serving size	mg		Serving size	mg
Fruits and Vegetables			Meat/Poultry		
Beets:			Fresh meat (pork, beef, chicken, etc.)	90g (3 ounces)	< 100
▪ fresh	½ cup	50	Chicken, breaded	1 piece	385
▪ pickled	½ cup	250	Turkey breast, regular	2 slices	600
Corn:			Turkey breast, low sodium	2 slices	455
▪ fresh	1 cob	5	Hot dog:		
▪ canned	½ cup	280	▪ regular	1 hotdog	550
▪ cream style	½ cup	370	▪ vegetarian	1 hotdog	217
Potato:			Hamburger:		
▪ baked or boiled	1 whole	15	▪ homemade	1 patty	60
Potato salad	½ cup	660	▪ fast food	1 patty	450
French fries (no added salt)			Sausage:		
▪ restaurant	10 fries	110	▪ breakfast	1 sausage	106
▪ frozen	10 fries	< 50	▪ pre-cooked, pork	1 sausage	475
Mashed potato, mix	½ cup	350	▪ Italian, pork	1 sausage	765
Scalloped potato, mix	½ cup	500	Bacon:		
Olives:			▪ 50% less salt	3 slices	150
▪ black	5 olives	170	▪ regular	2 slices	150-200
▪ green	5 olives	480	Salami	2 slices	500
Pickles:			Ham, luncheon meat	2 slices	750
▪ dill, low sodium	1 pickle	15	Ham, cured, roasted	90g (3 ounces)	1200
▪ dill, regular	1 pickle	840	Pastrami	2 slices	700
▪ bread and butter	5 pieces	800	Corned beef	90g (3 oz.)	800
Tomato, raw	1 tomato	10	Bologna	2 slices	500
Pizza sauce	250ml (1 cup)	1200	Bologna, low sodium	2 slices	170
Spaghetti sauce, canned	250ml (1 cup)	1200	Fish/Seafood		
Prepared Entrees			Fresh fish, unsalted	90g (3 oz.)	30-80
Lean Cuisine	1 entrée	200-600	Pickled herring	90g (3 oz.)	750
Rice-a-Roni	250ml (1 cup)	1110	Alaska king crab	90g (3 oz.)	910
Macaroni and cheese	250ml (1 cup)	730	Raw shellfish - mussels, scallops, shrimp	90g (3 oz.)	150-200
Hamburger helper	150g	1045	Dried cod	90g (3 oz.)	5975
			Canned tuna:		
			▪ regular	½ cup	250
			▪ low sodium	½ cup	< 80