

Reducing Sodium in Your Diet to Help Control Your Blood Pressure

The majority of sodium in our diets comes from packaged and restaurant food (not the salt shaker) and is a direct result of food processing. Even foods that may not taste salty can be major sources of sodium.

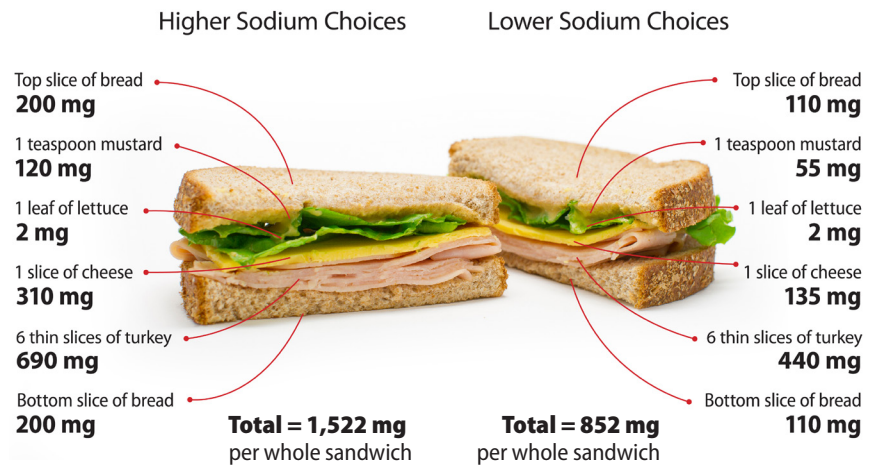
You might be able to lower the required dose of your blood pressure medicines if you reduce your sodium intake.

Things you can do—

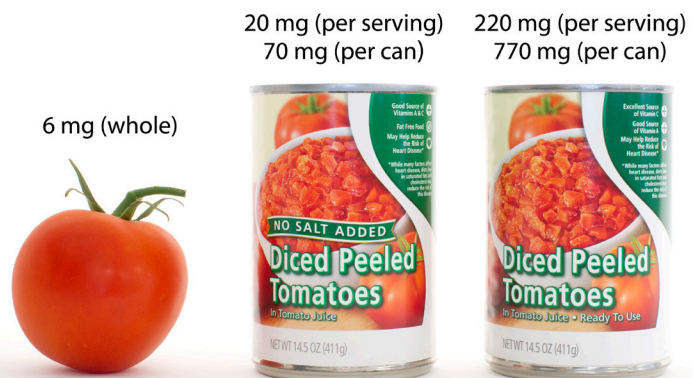
- Ask your doctor for a referral to a registered dietitian to help you reduce the amount of sodium in your diet.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Buy fresh, frozen (no sauce or cheese added), or no salt added canned vegetables.
- Use fresh poultry,* fish, pork,* and lean meat, rather than canned, cured, salted, smoked, and other processed meats.
- When available, buy low sodium, lower sodium, reduced sodium, or no salt added versions of products.
- Limit sauces, mixes, and “instant” products, including flavored rice and ready-made pasta.
- Use spices and salt-free seasonings to flavor your food.
- Compare Nutrition Facts labels on food packages for the Daily Value (DV) percentage or amount of sodium in milligrams (mg) per serving and choose the lowest sodium option.
- Ask for no salt added when eating out.

* Check the front of the package or ingredient list to see if saline or salt solution has been added—if so, choose another brand.

Choose wisely—sodium content can vary within food categories.



Remember, the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend that Americans aged 2 years and older reduce sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg per day. People aged 51 years and older and those of any age who are African American or who have high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease—about half the U.S. population and the majority of adults—should reduce sodium intake to 1,500 mg per day. **Ask your doctor if you have any of these conditions.**



Check the amount of sodium per serving, and don't forget to check the number of servings per container!

Learn more at www.cdc.gov/salt

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention



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