



MANAGING YOUR HEART FAILURE

REDUCING SALT INTAKE FOR PEOPLE WITH HEART FAILURE

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Why avoid salt?

Salt, or Sodium, makes your body retain fluid. For people with Heart Failure, consuming too much salt can worsen symptoms such as swelling, bloating and shortness of breath. If you are carrying extra fluid, your heart has to work harder to pump this extra fluid around the body.

Eating salty foods can make you feel thirsty, which can make it more difficult to keep to your fluid restriction.

How much salt do I need?

Less than 2000mg of salt (Sodium) each day is recommended.

You should start reading food labels to monitor your salt intake.

What a label uses as the serving size varies and may be very different to what is usually eaten in one serving. It is best to use the "per 100g" column to compare different products.

A Sodium content of less than 120mg per 100g is best. Avoid products containing more than 400mg Sodium per 100g.

There is no need to add extra salt to food, as many common foods such as fruit, vegetables, meat and cereals, contain enough salt for our bodies needs. Most of our salt intake comes from packed, tinned and processed foods, so we do not even realise how much we are having.

Does extra salt stop cramps?

Cramps are not due to lack of salt. Drinking enough fluid, and warming up before exercise can help to avoid cramps. Also check that you are getting enough calcium in your diet. Low fat dairy products are the best source of calcium.

Reading Nutritional Information

Below are two Nutrition Information tables for two different products. You will find these tables on the back of most packaged products that you buy. Discuss with your Heart Failure Nurse which is the lower Sodium choice.

Example 1

Nutritional Information Servings per package: 1 Serving size: 28g (1 bar)		
	Quantity per Serving	Quantity per 100g
Energy	433KJ (104 Cal)	1546 KJ (370 Cal)
Protein	2.9g	10.4g
Fat - total - saturated	0.5g 0.3g	1.9g 1.2g
Carbohy- drate - total - sugars	21.1g 8.7g	75.4g 30.9g
Sodium	62mg	222mg

Example 2

Nutritional Information Servings per package: 1 Serving size: 28g (1 bar)		
	Quantity per Serving	Quantity per 100g
Energy	700KJ (168 Cal)	2100 KJ (504 Cal)
Protein	5g	17.5g
Fat - total - saturated	1g 0.5g	3.8g 1.9g
Carbohy- drate - total - sugars	35g 15g	122.5g 45g
Sodium	42mg	150mg

Salt substitutes are NOT recommended

Products such as sea salt, rock salt, vegetable salt, celery salt, lemon pepper, and herb salt can contain high levels of sodium.

Check the nutrition label and ingredients.

CHOOSE - LOW SALT FOODS

Breads and cereals

(Wholegrain products are recommended)

- Salt reduced bread is preferable
- Fresh and dried pasta (no need to add salt to water)
- Low salt crackers and biscuits e.g. Ryvita, Vitaweat
- Rolled oats / porridge
- Weetbix, Sustain, muesli, Just Right, puffed wheat, oat or wheat bran
- Rice and other grains such as quinoa, freekah and barley
- Plain flour, cornflour

Fruit and vegetables

- Fresh, frozen and dried fruit
- Fresh and frozen vegetables
- Fruit juice
- Legumes (lentils, chick peas, soup mix, soy beans, kidney beans)
- No added salt canned beans and vegetables
- Low salt tomato paste

Milk, cheese and yoghurt

- Milk (reduced fat is best)
- Yoghurt (Greek style is best)
- Custard, dairy desserts and ice-cream
- Continental cheese, ricotta (check the label)
- Plant based milks such as soy, oat or almond

Meat, fish, chicken and eggs

- Fresh, unprocessed meat (lamb, beef, veal, pork), chicken, turkey
- Fresh fish and seafood
- Eggs
- Tuna / salmon tinned in spring water (salt-reduced)

Fats and oils

- No added salt or reduced salt butter and margarine
- Oil (extra-virgin olive oil)
- Avocado
- No added salt peanut butter

Drinks and snacks

- Water
- Milk, tea and coffee
- Cordial, soft drink (diet/low cal. best option)
- Unsalted nuts and popcorn - plain lollies and chocolate
- Dips that are homemade ie hommus

Other

- Homemade stock, low salt gravy, low salt chutney
- Curry powder, herbs, spices, vinegar, lemon juice, pepper
- Jam, honey, maple syrup

AVOID - HIGH SALT FOODS

Breads and cereals

- Savoury crackers
- Commercial sweet biscuits and shortbread with sodium content of more than 400mg/100g
- Commercial croissants, pastry, cakes, scones, muffins with sodium content of more than 400mg/100g
- Savoury breads and rolls (products based on self-raising flour)
- Packet rice, noodles and pasta with flavouring, e.g. instant noodles
- Tinned spaghetti

Fruit and vegetables

- Olives
- Pickled fruit
- Pickled and canned vegetables
- Tomato and vegetable juice
- Baked beans

Milk, cheese and yoghurt

- Cheeses such as cheddar, brie, camembert, feta, parmesan
- Cheese spreads
- Processed cheese slices

Meat, fish, chicken and eggs

- Cured, smoked, canned or salted meat (corned beef, ham, bacon, sausages, salami, brawn, pâté, frankfurts)
- Meat pies, sausage rolls, fish fingers, crumbed or battered fish, hamburgers, BBQ
- Chicken, pizza, chicken nuggets, Chinese take-away food
- Tinned fish in brine or tomato sauce, anchovies

Fats and oils

- Butter and margarine
- Peanut butter
- Oils seasoned with salt

Drinks and snacks

- Sports drinks, effervescent drinks
- Tinned soup or Bonox
- Salted nuts, popcorn, pretzels, potato and corn chips
- Dips, marinated or pickled foods

Other

- Commercial sauces: pasta, soy, tomato, BBQ, steak, tartare, teriyaki, Worcestershire, oyster, blackbean, satay
- Yeast/meat extracts, baking powder, self-raising flour
- Pickles, relish

HINTS TO REDUCE YOUR SALT INTAKE

- Choose products labelled 'low salt' or 'no added salt'
- Choose fresh foods as much as possible
- Don't add salt at the table or in cooking
- To add flavour, use herbs, spices, garlic, pepper, onions, shallots, mushrooms, lemon, vinegar and tomatoes
- Buy 'reduced salt' stock or make your own stock by boiling chicken or meat bones and vegetables instead of using stock cubes or powders
- Use condiments and sauces lightly
- Also try to slowly cut down your salt intake over a few months to allow your taste buds to adjust

COOKING ADVICE

What to use instead of salt...

- Freshly ground pepper, dry mustard powder
- Lemon juice, lime juice, vinegar
- A sprinkle of dried herbs
- Chopped fresh herbs, e.g. basil, oregano, mint, rosemary, thyme, parsley, chives, sage, tarragon
- Garlic, curry, chilli, onion, fresh ginger, spring onions
- Alcohol in cooking
- Spices, e.g. cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamon, ginger, cumin
- Tasting food before adding salt or salty sauces - you might find you don't need to add it!

FLAVOUR COMBINATIONS TO TRY

Food	Flavour enhancers
Pork	Garlic, lemon rind, coriander, apple sauce, ginger, mustard
Beef	Bay leaf, thyme, mustard, safe, red wine
Lamb	Rosemary, mint, oregano, garlic, ginger, paprika, currant jelly
Chicken	Sage, tarragon, garlic, white wine, chilli
Fish	Lemon juice, lemon pepper, lime juice, chives, parsley, vinegar
Tomato	Basil, garlic, black pepper, parsley, oregano
Potato	Chives, mint, parsley, paprika, oregano
Carrots	Ginger, cinnamon, honey, parsley
Peas	Mint



