

Q.

How can I reduce sodium in my diet?

A.

Take a closer look at what you're eating.

Imagine filling a teaspoon with salt and eating it. Your tongue and your brain would deliver an instant message: "Yuck! Too salty!"

And you would reach for the nearest glass of water to wash out your mouth.

Sounds gross to eat that much salt at once, right?

The truth...most people eat nearly TWICE that amount of salt every day.

- **That's more than double** the amount of sodium than recommended (no more than 1,500 mg per day) to keep the heart healthy.¹
- **A typical fast-food meal** like a burger and fries contains 1,400+ mg of sodium.
- **Many microwave meals and canned soups** contain more than 1,000 mg in a single serving.
- **Packaged and processed** snacks, sauces, dressings, meats, soups and chips are also high in sodium.



The trouble with high-sodium habits

One recent study found that people who eat the most high-sodium foods are 19 percent more likely to develop heart disease, than those who consume less sodium.²

Too much sodium also raises the risk for:³

- High blood pressure
- Stroke
- Kidney disease
- Poor bone health
- Headaches
- Stomach cancer

8 sodium habits for better health

Fortunately, a few simple changes can help you cut back on the amount of sodium you consume. Here are some things you can do:

- 1. Eat** more fresh fruits and veggies.
- 2. Buy** low-sodium foods and soups.
- 3. Read** food labels and track your sodium intake.

ASK THE Wellness DOCTOR

- 4. Drink** water instead of soft drinks.
- 5. Use** low-sodium salad dressings made with extra-virgin olive oil or vinegar.
- 6. Cut back** on eating fast-food and packaged meals.
- 7. Cook at home** more often. Use herbs and spices instead of salt to season food.
- 8. Go easy** on the salt shaker.

References

1. American Heart Association. (2021). How much sodium should I eat per day? From: <https://tinyurl.com/ydxbuh85>
2. Wang, Y.J., et al (2020). Dietary sodium intake and risk of cardiovascular disease: A systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis. *Nutrients*, 12(10);2934. From: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8ukbyu>
3. American Heart Association. (2022). Effects of excess sodium infographic. From: <https://tinyurl.com/szcth5az>