

GET THE FACTS:

Sources of Sodium in Your Diet



All across the United States, high sodium intake is a major problem. On average, American adults eat more than 3,300 milligrams (mg) of sodium a day, more than double the recommended limit for most adults. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010* recommend that Americans aged 2 and up reduce sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg per day. People 51 and older and those of any age who are African Americans or who have high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease—about half the U.S. population and the majority of adults—should further reduce sodium intake to 1,500 mg per day.

The vast majority of U.S. adults eat more sodium than they need. Having accurate information about where dietary salt comes from can help Americans stick to the recommendations.

The Salt Shaker Is Not to Blame

- More than 75% of the sodium Americans eat comes from restaurant, prepackaged, and processed foods.
- Only 5% of dietary sodium is added during home cooking and only 6% is added at the table.
- The remaining 12% of dietary sodium occurs naturally in foods.

Surprising Sources of Sodium

- Lots of packaged and processed foods can have high levels of sodium, and they may not even taste salty to many consumers.
- Breads and rolls, cold cuts/cured meats, and pizza are top contributors of sodium in the American diet.
- For example, one slice of bread can contain anywhere from 80 to 230 mg of sodium.
- Lunch meats are a major source—1 serving, around 6 thin slices, typically can contain 750 mg or more of sodium.

Food	Sodium Range (in milligrams)
1 slice white bread	80 - 230
3 oz turkey breast, deli or pre-packaged luncheon meat	450 - 1,050
4 oz slice frozen pizza, plain cheese, regular crust	370 - 730
4 oz slice restaurant pizza, plain cheese, regular crust	510 - 760
4 oz boneless, skinless chicken breast, fresh	40 - 330
3 oz chicken strips, restaurant, breaded	430 - 900
3 oz chicken nuggets, frozen, breaded	200 - 570
1 cup chicken noodle soup, canned prepared	100 - 940
1 corn dog, regular	350 - 620
1 cheeseburger, fast food restaurant	710 - 1,690
1 oz slice American cheese, processed (packaged or deli)	330 - 460
1 cup canned pasta with meat sauce	530 - 980
5 oz pork with barbecue sauce (packaged)	600 - 1,120
1 oz potato chips, plain	50 - 200



Sodium levels of the same food can vary widely, so choose wisely.

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Keeping an Eye on Labels as You Shop Is Important

- Frozen pizza typically contains between 370 and 730 mg of sodium in just 1 slice.
- Soup can also be high in sodium. For example, tomato soup can range from 700 to 1,260 mg of sodium in 8 ounces (1 cup).
- Many seemingly healthy foods, such as canned vegetables, often contain added sodium.
- Raw chicken and other meats can have sodium and flavor solutions added.
- Even foods labeled as “less sodium” or “reduced sodium” can contain significant amounts. One tablespoon of “less sodium” soy sauce typically contains more than 500 mg, and consumers often eat more than 1 serving at a time.

Why Cut Back? And How?

Eating too much sodium can lead to increased blood pressure, which can raise your risk for heart attack, stroke, and other cardiovascular conditions. Reducing sodium

intake can help lower these risks. To help protect your heart, make a commitment to:

- **Try to eat more fruits and vegetables.** For canned and frozen vegetables, look for no salt added or low sodium versions, or choose frozen varieties without sauce.
- **Check nutrition labels on packaged foods.** Compare sodium in different brands for products like processed soups, dressings/sauces, breads, and frozen meals, and choose those with lower sodium.
- **Eat at home more frequently, and prepare more meals from scratch.** To boost flavor, use salt free herbs and spices rather than processed sauces, packaged broths, or condiments.
- **Ask restaurants not to add salt to your meal,** and use condiments in small amounts. Also ask your favorite restaurants, stores, and food manufacturers to offer more low-sodium options.
- **Re-train your taste buds.** Over time, the less sodium you eat, the less you’ll want.

Learn more at www.cdc.gov/salt

CHOOSE FRESH OR LOW SODIUM FOODS

FRESH TOMATOES



6 mg (whole)

NO SALT ADDED CANNED TOMATOES



20 mg (per 1/2 cup)

CANNED TOMATOES



220 mg (per 1/2 cup)

For more information please contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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