

WHERE DO I START?

1. Check food labels for salt content

| Nutrition Facts | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| Per 1 can (355 ml) | |
| Amount | % Daily Value |
| Calories 80 | |
| Fat 0 g | 0% |
| Saturated 0 g | 0% |
| + Trans 0 g | |
| Cholesterol 0 mg | |
| Sodium 140 mg | 6% |
| Carbohydrate 16 g | |
| Fibre 5 g | 20% |
| Sugars 11 g | 11% |
| Protein 2 g | |
| Vitamin A 8% | Vitamin C 60% |

Tips on how to choose foods that contain less salt:

- Look for foods that contain less than 240 mg of sodium per serving or less than 10% of the daily value.
- Foods that are labeled “low sodium” (140 mg or less per serving) are very good choices... as long as you eat just one serving.
- Avoid foods that contain more than 400 mg of sodium per serving.

2. Eat fewer processed foods, even if they don't taste salty.

3. Eat at home as much as possible. Restaurant and take-out foods are very high in sodium.

4. Choose smaller serving sizes. The more generous the servings, the more salt they contain:

SIDE DISH



MAIN MEAL



| SERVING SIZE | |
|---------------|----------|
| SMALL | LARGE |
| 1.5 | 3 |
| SALT PACKETS* | |

*excluding salt added for preparation or at the table

5. No time to cook? Is it having a negative impact on your diet?

Here are some tips that can help you reduce your salt intake:

- Buy frozen vegetables or fresh, ready-to-serve produce like pre-washed lettuce, sliced mushrooms and cherry tomatoes.
- Instead of using canned or jarred pasta sauces, make your own quick sauce with canned no salt added tomatoes.
- Replace deli meats with quick-cooking fondue meats for a delicious sandwich filling.
- Freeze vegetable cooking water to use as a base for a tasty homemade soup or buy commercial reduced-sodium broths.
- A quick homemade vinaigrette will make your salad even more delicious.
- Sea salt and vegetable salt are no alternative since they are rich in sodium.
- Try some new salt-free flavour boosters for your vegetables: ginger, toasted sesame seeds, citrus zest, jalapeno peppers, sambal oelek, curry, cardamom, five spice powder, seasoned vinegars, dried herbs or garlic, celery or onion powder.

6. Your taste buds need time to adjust to less salty food. Don't give up! Overtime, you'll develop a preference for the reduced-sodium versions of your favourite foods. Why not start with half and half? For instance, mix salted nuts with plain roasted nuts, mix regular vegetable juice with the low-sodium version...

TRY IT AND GIVE IT TIME - IT'S WORTH IT!

To help you reach your healthy sodium intake goals, visit:

www.hypertension.qc.ca

click on: [Infopublic-Foireauxquestions](#)

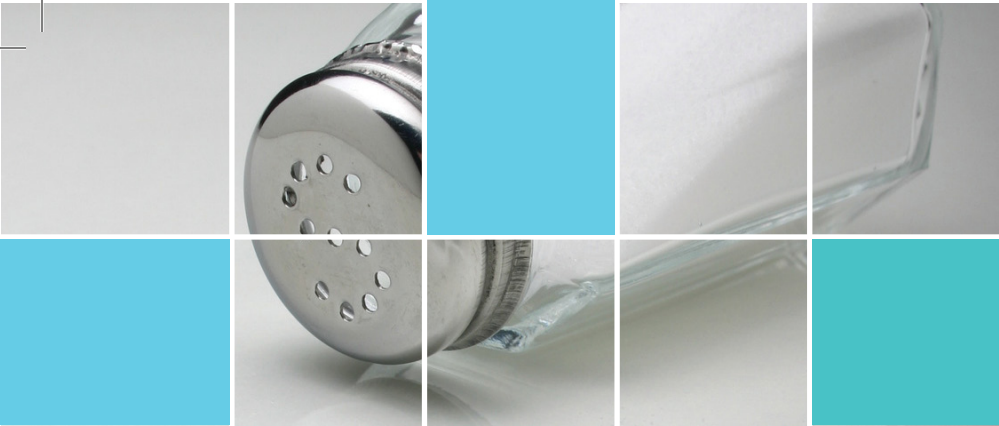
An initiative of the members of the Société québécoise d'hypertension artérielle

www.hypertension.qc.ca

Authors - Chantal Blais, RD, Émilie Raymond, RD
Designer - Hélène Lambin - Revised 2025

HALT THE SALT!





GOOD NEWS!

High blood pressure (HBP) and salt (sodium) intake are closely linked. Salt plays a major role in raising blood pressure, especially in people who are sensitive to sodium.

Reducing your salt (sodium) intake can help prevent or control high blood pressure. In other words, sodium affects us all, whether or not we have hypertension!

Why is it so important to control blood pressure?

High blood pressure (HBP) is the most common modifiable risk factor for cardiovascular disease and related mortality. It affects approximately **1 in 4 adults** in Canada, and this proportion rises to **1 in 2 adults** among those over 65 years of age.

I don't put salt on my food so why should I worry?

Because most of the salt (sodium) we eat is hidden in our food! On average, Canadians consume more than **3 000 mg of sodium** daily, or **twice** the recommended daily intake, which doesn't even include salt added at the table or when cooking. Overconsumption of salt starts early in life: toddlers and young children already consume twice the recommended sodium intake for their respective age groups.

So where does all this salt come from?

Nearly 80 % of our sodium intake comes from processed and restaurant foods like pizza, deli meats, submarine sandwiches, hamburgers, hot dogs, canned soups and packaged foods like pasta dinners. The salt you cook with or sprinkle on your food accounts for just 11 % and the salt found naturally in foods adds another 10 %.

A look at the sodium content of some common foods

| | approximately (mg) |
|--|--------------------|
| Canned vegetable soup, 250 mL | 300-600 |
| Homemade vegetable soup, 250 mL | 280 |
| Seasoned rice, package/can, cooked, 250 mL | 1 200 |
| Rice, cooked without salt, 250 mL | 4 |
| Lean ham, 100 g | 1 200 |
| Pork tenderloin, cooked, 100 g | 65 |
| Vegetable juice, regular, 250 mL | 480 |
| Vegetable juice, low sodium, 250 mL | 135 |

Recommended daily sodium intake

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), it is best to limit sodium intake to **between 2 000 and 2 300 mg per day**.

Within the highest consumers, a reduction of 1 000 mg per day can improve blood pressure, even though the recommended target is not achieved.

*2 000 mg of sodium = 8 packets of salt

BEWARE - NOT ALL HIGH-SODIUM FOODS TASTE SALTY!

DON'T RELY ON YOUR TASTE BUDS - READ THE NUTRITION FACTS PANEL ON PROCESSED FOODS

Which of the following pairs contains the most salt?

- 1 - **a)** 7 salted soda crackers or **b)** 1 commercial carrot muffin?
- 2 - **a)** 1 instant chocolate pudding or **b)** 100 ml salted peanuts?
- 3 - **a)** 1 instant oatmeal package or **b)** 30 mg mozzarella chesse?
- 4 - **a)** 125 ml vegetable juice or **b)** 12 oz vanilla hot chocolate with almond milk?

ANSWERS (in red):
1 - a) 230 mg **b) 370 mg** 2 - **a) 390 mg** b) 250 mg
3 - **a) 310 mg** b) 215 mg 4 - a) 225 mg **b) 270 mg**

Did you know that salt is added to many popular kids' foods? For instance, Sunny Delight drink contains ¾ of a salt packet for every 250 ml. Reheatable pastries (like Pop-Tarts, Toaster Strudels and frozen waffles) contain an average of 1 to 1½ salt packets for every 2 pastries. Just a few of these sweet but surprisingly salty foods can quickly use up y our whole daily sodium allowance.

These days, you can choose restaurant meals that are low in sugar, fat and calories, but they are still very high in sodium!

| MENU | Teaspoon sugar | fat | Salt packets | Calories |
|--|----------------|-----|--------------|----------|
| 1 Big Mac + 1 fries + 1 regular medium cola | 29 | 10 | 5 | 1 110 |
| 1 Grilled Chicken Mc Wrap + chipotle sauce + 1 diet cola + cantaloupe | 11 | 6 | 14 | 600 |
| ¼ chicken (breast) + 1 fries + 1 bun + BBQ sauce + creamy coleslaw + 1 regular medium cola | 30 | 12 | 5 | 1 375 |
| 1 grilled chicken breast + rice + spicy asian sauce + vegetables + 1 diet cola | 15 | 5 | 8 | 670 |