

thinking ahead...



for your company
for your employees
for your future
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WELLNESS WEEKLY

Sodium... *Consume in Moderation*



Sodium plays an important role in maintaining the body's fluid balance. It's essential for muscles and nerves to function properly. However, most people consume too much. FDA guidelines call for less than 2,400 mg of sodium per day -- about 1 teaspoon of table salt. Surprisingly, most of our salt intake doesn't come from the salt shaker; it's hidden in many of the foods we buy at the grocery store. Listed below are a few foods to keep a look out for high amounts of sodium.

Frozen Dinners

They are quick, easy, and often low calorie, but tend to be very high in sodium. A 5-oz. frozen turkey and gravy dinner packs 787 mg. of sodium. Try to cut back on frozen meals, and eat fresh vegetables and meats.

Ready-to-Eat Cereals

Some brands of corn flakes and raisin bran's have between 266 mg – 342 mg of sodium per cup. Try Puffed rice or puffed wheat, these are both sodium free.

Vegetable Juices

Veggie drinks are a healthy way to get your 5-a-day, but they're not always a smart choice if you're watching your sodium. One cup of vegetable juice cocktail contains 653 mg of sodium. Try to look for a low sodium vegetable juice.

Canned Vegetables

Canned vegetables are typically loaded with preservatives and seasonings that add extra sodium. A cup of canned cream-style corn contains 730 mg of sodium. Rinse canned vegetable thoroughly or buy ones labeled "no salt added".

Soups

Soups are typically loaded with sodium. A cup of chicken noodle soup (canned) contains as much as 1,106 mg of sodium. Look for reduced-sodium versions of your favorites.

Packaged Deli Meats

One look at the sodium content in packaged meats should stop you in your tracks. Beef or pork dry salami (2 slices) can pack 362 milligrams of sodium. Be a label reader. Different brands and different meats have differing amounts of sodium. And beware: a "healthier" packaged meat may actually have more sodium than its higher-fat counterpart. Some brands have meats with 50% less sodium.

Other Tips:

Watch the Serving Size: Sodium content listed on a nutrition label is generally not for the entire package, rather just one serving size. Before consuming, determine exactly what one serving size equals.

Be Careful When Eating Out: Restaurant soups are generally very high in sodium, as are appetizers with cheeses or meats. Casserole entrées and Rice Pilaf are also common pitfalls. The word "sauce" at a restaurant is sometimes synonymous with sodium, so you may want to steer clear of entrees covered in sauce.

Make Smarter Choices at Restaurants: Fish can be a lower-sodium choice at a restaurant, as long as you watch how it's seasoned. Steamed vegetables (prepared without salt) are another smart choice. Also, try a salad with dressing on the side.