

Tips to help Reduce Salt Intake in the Diet

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Salt in your diet has a specific function for your body, and some [sodium](#) is necessary. Healthy sodium levels can help maintain a normal blood pressure and make nerves and muscles work the way they are supposed to. However, many people eat too much sodium, which can cause major health problems. A high sodium intake can lead to high blood pressure, kidney issues, bloating, and water retention. Try some of these tips to reduce sodium intake.

Avoid the Salt Shaker.

Much of the average person's added salt intake comes from the salt shaker. A teaspoon of salt contains all of the daily recommendation for sodium. For someone who adds salt to food several times a day, this can add up quickly. Try reducing the amount of salt you add. Once your taste buds get used to less salt, you probably won't miss it as much. You can also try other spices as an alternative to salt, such as pepper, garlic, or even lemon juice. All these ingredients add flavor without the sodium.

Skip packaged foods.

Most prepared foods will contain a lot of sodium. This includes soups, frozen dinners, boxed meals, canned meals, and packaged meats. If you do buy these items, look for brands with reduced sodium. There are some soups, meats and other frozen dinners that are reduced in sodium. The best method to avoid sodium is to make the meals yourself so you control how much sodium you add. If you lead a busy life this may not always be possible, so look for the best alternatives. You could also try some of these [homemade meals](#) that are healthy and fast.

Eat frozen or fresh vegetables.

Unlike frozen meals, frozen vegetables usually aren't high in sodium. It's the canned vegetables you have to be aware of. Just a serving can contain nearly a quarter of your daily sodium allowance. Fresh vegetables are best to get all the nutrients, but if the vegetables aren't in season, frozen will be the next best thing.

Replace soda with water.

Most soda, even diet soda, will have quite a bit of sodium. This can cause you to feel bloated and full without getting any nutrients. Many people who have been drinking diet drinks for a long time find themselves addicted, so this can be difficult to wean off from. Good alternatives include flavored water, sugar-free lemonade, or tea. If you really feel like you can't live without diet soda, try [Zevia](#), which is a diet drink made with Stevia, a natural sweetener.

Sodium is a natural ingredient and you shouldn't attempt to avoid it completely. Doing so would be nearly impossible. Most doctors recommend 1500-2000 milligrams of sodium a day. If you consume too much salt in your foods, reducing your intake can improve your overall health. Try some of these tips or speak with a nutritionist to find out more about reducing sodium to improve your health.

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