

Nutrition Focus is a monthly nutrition publication offering relevant and evidenced-based nutrition information.

## Get to Know Sodium



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### What is Sodium?

When people think of sodium, they often think of table salt, also known as sodium chloride. However, sodium is a mineral found not only in salt, but in nearly all foods. Our bodies need some sodium to maintain our muscle and nerve functions and to help regulate our fluid balance. However, too much sodium intake can be harmful to overall health. Therefore, it is important to be mindful of how much sodium you are consuming each day.

### How can we tell how much sodium is in food?

The FDA mandates that food labels report sodium contents. This allows consumers to see how much sodium is in one serving of a food product. Sodium is measured in milligrams (mg). Current US dietary guidelines recommend limiting daily sodium intake to under 2,300 mg. However for those with certain health conditions, such as renal or cardiovascular disease, lower sodium intakes may be recommended. It is important to consult your dietitian or physician for individualized recommendations.

### Strategies to avoid having too much sodium:

- Choose items with less than 120 mg of sodium per serving.
- Prioritize food items with 10% or less for the daily value of sodium.
- Try to find foods with a higher number for calories than mg of sodium.
  - For example, in this food label, 115 is larger than 80. Therefore this would not be a great choice for a low sodium food.

### Give sodium free flavor a try!

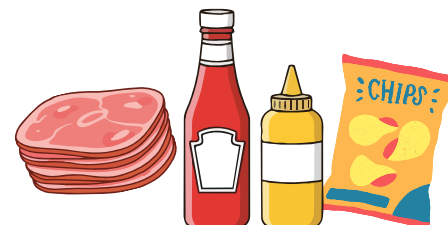
Store bought seasoning blends often contain very high amounts of sodium. Below are some alternative flavoring options that will not add unnecessary sodium to your diet.

- DASH Salt Free Seasoning Products
- Fresh Citrus Juice or Zest
- “Powders” instead of “Salts” - for example garlic powder instead of garlic salt.
- Fresh or Dried Herbs

Many brands also offer products you love in “sodium-free”, “salt-free”, or “low-sodium” versions. This is a great way to cut back on sodium without losing foods you know and love.

★ *By managing your sodium intake, you can protect your organs, support your heart, and prioritize your longterm health* ★

Nutrition Facts Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (250 mL) / par 1 tasse (250 mL)	
Amount Teneur	% Daily Value % valeur quotidienne
<b>Calories / Calories 80</b>	
<b>Fat / Lipides 0 g</b>	<b>0 %</b>
Saturated / saturés 0 g + Trans / trans 0 g	0 %
<b>Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg</b>	<b>0 %</b>
<b>Sodium / Sodium 115 mg</b>	<b>5 %</b>
<b>Carbohydrate / Glucides 10 g</b>	<b>4 %</b>
Fibre / Fibres 0 g	0 %
Sugars / Sucres 11 g	
<b>Protein / Protéines 9 g</b>	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	15 %
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	0 %
Calcium / Calcium	30 %
Iron / Fer	0 %
Vitamin D / Vitamine D	45 %



### Common High Sodium Foods:

- Deli Meats
- Processed Meats & Cheeses
- Snacks - Chips, Pretzels, Crackers
- Condiments and Salad Dressings
- Canned Foods & Soups
- Frozen Meals
- Restaurant & Fast Food