



Salt Sense

Whether you reach for the salt shaker at every meal or only occasionally, you are probably taking in more salt than you realize.

What exactly is salt?

Salt is sodium chloride. Food labels list sodium rather than salt content. When reading a Nutrition Facts Panel on a food product, look for the sodium content. Foods that are low in sodium will have less than 140 mg or 5% of the Daily Value (DV). Salt is used in foods as a flavor and a preservative.

Where do you find it?

On average, the natural salt content of food accounts for only about 10% of total intake, while discretionary salt use (i.e., salt added at the table or while cooking) provides another 5 to 10% of total intake. Approximately 75% is derived from salt added by manufacturers.

Do we need salt?

Yes. We need some salt to help maintain our fluid balance. Salt is lost when we sweat or urinate. To replace these losses, we need to take in salt from foods and drinks. Most people, however take in way more salt than they need.

Tips for Lowering Your Salt:

- ▶ Eat less processed foods. This is probably where you are getting most of your salt. Avoid things in cans, bags and boxes.
- ▶ Read labels. When you do choose processed items look for ones with less than 140 mg of sodium per serving.
- ▶ Remember, salt is salt. Whether it is sea salt or regular table salt the sodium is about the same, so be careful with them all.
- ▶ Spice up your food with other seasonings. You can add flavor to your foods without adding salt by sticking with herbs and spices like garlic, pepper, ginger, cinnamon and others.
- ▶ Leave the sports drinks to sports time. If you aren't exercising heavily you don't need a sports drink. The salt in a sports drink is meant to replace what you lose when sweating, so if you aren't sweating, you don't need it.



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