



**British Heart
Foundation**



Salt & Sodium in our Diet

Eating too much salt may raise your blood pressure, and having high blood pressure increases your risk of developing coronary heart disease.

So to keep your heart healthy it's important that you don't eat too much salt each day.

As we're all spending more time at home, it can be challenging to stick to a healthy diet. It can be especially hard to resist salty snacks and ready meals, which are usually high in salt.

How much is too much?

Adults should eat less than 6 grams of salt each day - that's about one teaspoon. This includes the salt that's contained within ready-made foods like bread, as well as the salt you add during cooking and at the table.

Children should eat less salt than adults, according to their age.

Age	Max. salt per day	Max. sodium per day
1-3 yrs	2g	0.8g
4-6yrs	3g	0.2g
7-10 yrs	5g	2.0g
11 and older	6g	2.5g
Adults	6g	2.5g

How is 'sodium' on food labels related to salt?

Sodium when written on food labels is just another way of talking about the salt content of food. It is, however, measured differently to salt. Use the chart to find out how much sodium is too much.

How do I know how much salt I'm eating?

Download our leaflet [Taking control of salt](#) to learn more.

One of the best ways to work out how much salt you're eating is to check the food label or nutritional information on the packaging of any food you're buying or eating. If you're eating pre-prepared food, like a soup, pizza or ready-meal, take a look at the 'amount per serving' to see how much salt is in your whole meal.

How much is too much per 100g?

	Low	Medium	High
Salt	0g - 0.3g	0.3g - 1.5g	More than 1.5g
Sodium	0g - 0.1g	0.1g - 0.6g	More than 0.6g

Some food products have traffic light colours on the label to help you make your choice. With traffic light colours, you can see at a glance if the food you're looking at has high, medium or low amounts of each of these nutrients in 100g of the food.

Red - high

Amber - medium

Green - low

Hidden salt

Most people already know that foods like crisps or dry roasted nuts are high in salt, but you might be surprised how much salt every day foods can add to your diet. Around three quarters of the salt we eat has already been added to our food before we buy it.

As well as foods like packet soups and sauces and ready meals, every day foods like bread and breakfast cereals often have added salt too. Because we eat these foods so often, the amount of salt they provide can really add up.

The amount of salt will vary between different brands and varieties, so checking food labels can help you choose healthier options for your diet.

Top tips for reducing your salt intake

Low salt food doesn't need to be tasteless or bland. There are lots of things you can do to make sure your food is still exciting and satisfying.

- Check the nutritional information on food labels and try to pick low-salt options and ingredients
- Add less salt when cooking and don't add salt to your food at the table. As you get used to the taste of food without salt, cut it out completely.
- Flavour your food with pepper, herbs, garlic, spices or lemon juice instead.
- Watch out for cooking sauces and seasonings like soy sauce or jerk seasoning -some of these are very high in salt.
- Swap salty snacks such as crisps and salted nuts with fruit and vegetables instead.
- Avoid saltier foods such as bacon, cheese, takeaways, ready meals and other processed foods.

[BHF - Salt](#)