



# Limiting Sodium (Salt) When You Have Heart Failure

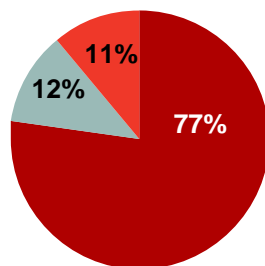
Sodium is a mineral found in food, table salt, and sea salt. Your body needs some sodium, but too much sodium causes your body to hold on to (or retain) fluid. This fluid build-up makes your heart work harder. The fluid build-up can cause swelling in your feet, legs, or belly. Fluid can also build up in your lungs, making it hard for you to breathe.

If your weight increases more than 4 lbs (2 kg) over 2 days in a row or 5 lbs (2.5 kg) in 1 week, you are retaining fluid. If this happens, you should call your health care provider right away.

You should restrict the amount of sodium you eat to 2000mg or less each day.

## In the average Canadian diet, where does sodium come from?

- In ready-made processed foods and restaurant meals (77%)
- Naturally occurring in food (12%)
- Added to food in cooking and at the table (11%)



## How to avoid salt (sodium)?

- ♥ Eat fresh foods most of the time and prepare home-cooked, low sodium meals.
- ♥ Frozen foods are acceptable if they do not have added salt or sodium additives (which are used as preservatives).

- ♥ Remove the salt shaker from the table. Don't add salt, flavoured salts or seasonings high in salt to your foods.  
**One teaspoon of salt contains 2300mg of sodium!**



- ♥ Season your food with herbs, spices, lemon juice, dry mustard, and garlic. Try one of the many seasoning blends which contain no salt such as Mrs. Dash.
- ♥ Stay away from eating:
  - processed foods
  - deli meats
  - pickled foods
  - salted snack foods such as potato chips, pretzels, dips, and salted nuts
- ♥ Limit the amount of canned foods you eat. Choose products labelled 'low sodium'. Foods labelled 'lower', 'less' or 'reduced in salt or sodium' may still be high in sodium (including soups and meats).
- ♥ Eat out less often.
  - Ask restaurants to provide information on low sodium choices.
  - Restaurant meals and fast foods are always higher in salt than home cooked low sodium meals.
  - For more info, please refer to *Low Sodium (Salt) Eating Out* fact sheet at <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating/low-sodium-choices.html>



## Can I use Salt Substitutes?

Some salt substitutes use potassium instead of sodium. Check with your doctor or dietitian before using a salt substitute because some people need to limit how much potassium they have each day.

**Keep your sodium intake to less than 2000mg each day.**

**As you gradually reduce the amount of salt you are eating, your taste buds will adjust!**

## How do I know how much sodium is in food?

Here are some helpful tips when reading the nutrition label:

- ♥ Look at the serving size – the amount of sodium listed is per serving (not the whole package).
- ♥ Keep track of the total amount of sodium you eat.  
**Remember:** Your maximum recommended daily amount of sodium is **no more than 2000mg per day from all sources.**
- ♥ Keep the sodium content of each meal below 650mg – this helps spread out your sodium intake over the day preventing excessive thirst and/or fluid retention.
- ♥ By law, foods labelled ‘low sodium’ must contain 140mg or less per serving.

**Other ingredients high in sodium include:** baking soda, brine, monosodium glutamate (MSG), soy sauce, fish sauce, garlic salt, celery salt, or any ingredient with ‘sodium’ as part of its name.

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size: Per ½ cup (125ml)			
Amount	% Daily Value		
Calories 140			
Total Fat 0.5g	1%		
Saturated Fat 0.2g	1%		
+ Trans Fat 0g			
Cholesterol 0mg	0%		
Sodium 390mg	16%		
Total Carbohydrate 28g	9%		
Dietary Fibre 5g	20%		
Sugars 9g			
Protein 7g			
Vitamin A	2%	Vitamin C	0%
Calcium	8%	Iron	15%

## Look what happens to the sodium content of foods when they are processed

Unprocessed	Processed
Cucumber 7 slices = <b>2mg</b>	Dill pickle 1 medium = <b>569mg</b>
Chicken Breast 3oz = <b>74mg</b>	Chicken Pie 1 serving frozen = <b>889mg</b>
Tomato 1 small = <b>14mg</b>	Tomato Soup 1 cup = <b>960mg</b>
Pork Tenderloin 3 oz = <b>58mg</b>	Ham 3oz = <b>1095mg</b>