

Hidden Salt: High-Sodium Foods



One of the first steps to controlling high blood pressure is to reduce the extra sodium in your diet. Two grams (2,000 mg/milligrams; 2 g) or less each day is the usual recommendation for people who have high blood pressure.

Regularly eating high-sodium foods will often cause you to consume more than 2,000 mg per day, even if you don't add extra salt. Use this list of common foods and products to see if too much sodium might be part of your high blood pressure problem. If so, ask a registered dietitian or your Extension agent to help you learn more about reading food labels and making substitutions for high-sodium foods.

Foods High in Sodium

- Table salt (1 teaspoon provides about 2,000 mg of sodium)
- Seasonings that contain salt (examples: celery salt, garlic salt, onion salt, season-all, "lite salt")
- Sauerkraut or other vegetables prepared in brine (pickled)
- Regular canned soups
- Breads and rolls with salted toppings
- Potato chips, corn chips, pretzels, saltines, salty crackers, salted popcorn
- Salty or smoked meats (examples: bacon, bologna, chipped or corned beef, frankfurters, ham, meats koshered by salting, luncheon meats, salt pork, sausage, smoked tongue, canned or pickled meats)
- Salty or smoked fish (examples: anchovies, caviar, salted and dried cod, herring, sardines)
- Processed cheese, cheese spreads, or high-sodium cheeses like Roquefort, Camembert, Gorgonzola, and Parmesan
- Salted nuts, olives, bacon, bacon fat
- Regular peanut butter
- Bouillon, ketchup, chili sauces, meat extracts, meat sauces, meat tenderizers, monosodium glutamate, prepared mustard, relishes, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce
- Antacids containing sodium (example: Alka-Seltzer)
- Toothpastes containing baking soda
- Fast foods and prepackaged foods
- Canned or frozen entrees (many times they lower the fat and increase the salt)

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