

Sodium Restriction in Heart Failure

Sodium Restriction

If you have heart failure, your healthcare provider may recommend limiting the amount of sodium (salt) in your diet. Eating a low-sodium diet means more than not adding extra salt to your meals. Many dishes are high in sodium before they reach the table. Try to avoid those and processed foods by reading food nutrition labels and following some common guidelines when you purchase food, cook for yourself, or go out to eat.

Nutrition Labels

- Nutrition labels are found on all non-fresh foods you purchase from the grocery store and at some restaurants.
- Most healthcare providers will recommend that you have less than 3,000 mg of sodium a day.
- Talk to your healthcare provider to learn your exact sodium limitation per day.
- Your limitation will be based on the type of heart failure you have, the cause of the heart failure, and your degree of symptoms.
- Nutrition labels can tell you how much sodium is in one serving of a particular food.
- The two parts of a food label to review are the serving size and sodium in milligrams (mg) per serving size (see arrows).
- If you eat more than one serving size, you must adjust your sodium intake of the food item ingested.
- Keep a journal of what you ate, and how much sodium is in each food to ensure you stay below the limitation of sodium per day set by your health care provider.

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 5 oz. (120g)			
Servings Per Container 4			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories		33	
Calories from Fat 0			
Total Fat	0g	% Daily Value*	
Saturated Fat	0g	0%	
Cholesterol	0mg	0%	
Sodium	25mg	0%	
Total Carbohydrate	16g	1%	
Dietary Fiber	0g	5%	
Sugars	1g	0%	
Protein	2g		
Vitamin A	180%	•	Vitamin C 15%
Calcium	5%	•	Iron 2%
Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.			
	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less Than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less Than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less Than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less Than	2,400 mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Sodium Restriction at Home

- At home, throw away the salt shaker at the table.
- Instead of salt, use pepper or other spices such as Mrs. Dash.
- Try to avoid processed foods such as boxed, canned, bagged, and pre-packaged meals. These contain over 70% of the salt we eat.

Sodium Restriction Away From Home

- When dining in a restaurant, ask your server about special food preparations or low-sodium menu options.
- Do not eat at buffet-style restaurants where you cannot control the amount of sodium in the food.
- Avoid restaurants where most of the food is pre-packaged.

Sodium Levels in Common Foods

Low-sodium	High-sodium
Fresh fruits and vegetables	Canned, smoked, or salted meats
Frozen fruits and vegetables	Full-salt canned soups
No-salt canned vegetables	Boxed or pre-packaged meals
Low-sodium canned soups*	Seasoning mixes that contain salt
High-fiber foods	Fast food
Small amounts of dressing	Breading used on any foods
Dried beans or peas	Bread/bread products, like pizza crust, bagels
Low-sodium breads*	Pizza
Low-sodium condiments*	Deli meats
Low-sodium cheeses*	Condiments used on sandwiches
Broiled, grilled, or roasted meats	Broth, sauce, and gravy

Ask questions and get advice about your low-sodium diet from your healthcare provider (doctor, nurse, dietician, or nutritionist).

* Read food labels (nutrition facts), as some low-sodium products may actually have too much sodium.