

Missouri Call to Action: **SHOW ME LESS SODIUM!**

Where Does Sodium Come From?

Most of the sodium in our diet comes from salt (sodium chloride). Using less salt when cooking and at the table will help, but we get the majority of sodium in our diet from processed and restaurant foods.



Too Much Salt Is Harmful!

Too much sodium can increase blood pressure. High blood pressure is the leading cause for stroke and a major cause for heart attack. It is also a major risk factor for kidney disease. Reducing sodium intake lowers blood pressure.

How are Sodium and Potassium Related?

An important factor regarding sodium and blood pressure control is the amount of potassium in our diet. If potassium intake is low, then blood pressure will rise even higher in response to sodium.

Unfortunately, potassium intake is often low in the average person's diet.

Eating more fruits and vegetables can help reduce blood pressure. They are naturally low in sodium and high in potassium. As you reduce your sodium intake, increase your potassium intake to 4,700 milligrams (mg)/day.

In 2012, over 32% of all Missouri adults reported they have high blood pressure.⁽¹⁾

How Much Salt is Too Much?

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010, most adults should reduce their sodium intake. The average American consumes over **3,400** mg of sodium each day. However, the recommended amount for the general population is less than **2,300** mg of sodium per day (2). In addition, it is particularly important to reduce sodium intake if:

- You are 51 years of age or older.
- You are African American.
- You have high blood pressure.
- You have diabetes.
- You have chronic kidney disease.

Half of the U.S. population falls into one of the above categories, but everyone can benefit from reduced sodium consumption.

- **1 Teaspoon = 2400 mg of SALT**

Primary Sources of Sodium in the Average U.S. Diet



- 5% added while cooking
- 6% added while eating
- 12% from natural sources
- 77% from processed and prepared foods

1. Source: Missouri 2012 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. Office of Epidemiology. August 2013.

2. Source: Institute of Medicine (IOM).2013. *Sodium intake in populations: Assessment of evidence*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

What Can Be Done to Reduce Sodium Intake?

Individual level:

- Start by knowing recommended limits for daily sodium intake.
- Retrain your taste buds by decreasing your salt gradually.
- Choose fresh foods rather than processed foods. If not available, choose frozen or canned with little or no salt.
- When buying processed foods, read the Nutrition Facts label and choose foods that are lower in sodium.
- When eating out in restaurants, ask for foods with little or no sodium.
- Support policy-makers who can implement policies to reduce sodium in the nation's food supply.

Local and State Level:

- Increase public awareness about the recommended daily sodium intake and the health benefits of eating foods with lower salt.
- Implement food policies that set standards for nutrition (including sodium) at schools and businesses.

National Level:

- Policymakers can work nationally to support measures that reduce the amount of sodium found in processed and restaurant foods.



Look at the nutrition facts label below for a generic bag of barbeque potato chips and notice the high calorie, total fat, saturated fat, and sodium content per serving.

Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size 1 bag 7 oz 198g (198 g)		
Amount Per Serving		
Calories 972	Calories from Fat 558	
% Daily Value*		
Total Fat 64g	99%	
Saturated Fat 16g	80%	
Trans Fat		
Cholesterol 0mg	0%	
Sodium 1485mg	62%	
Total Carbohydrate 105g	35%	
Dietary Fiber 9g	35%	
Sugars		
Protein 15g		
Vitamin A 9%	Vitamin C 112%	
Calcium 10%	Iron 21%	
<small>*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.</small>		
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The Salty Seven: Top sources of salt in the average American diet

Poultry



Bread and rolls



Hot dogs and sausage



Sandwiches

Cold Cuts

Pizza



Chips and Pretzels



For more information regarding individual, state, and national efforts to reduce salt intake, please visit:

Missouri Council For Activity and Nutrition at <http://extension.missouri.edu/mocan/skipsalt/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/salt



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