

Sodium

Many people with diabetes also have high blood pressure. If you have high blood pressure, you should be careful about the amount of sodium in your diet. Your doctor can tell you how much sodium is healthy for you.

Sodium is measured in milligrams, or mg. One teaspoon of salt contains 2,400 mg of sodium. A moderate amount of sodium in the diet would be 3,000 mg. To reduce sodium, use less salt in cooking and at the table.

According to the American Diabetes Association, “hidden salt” may be the biggest source of sodium in our diets. Hidden salt is found in processed foods. These include fast food, restaurant food, canned food and frozen and boxed dinners. Read the Nutrition Facts label to find how much hidden salt foods contain.



There are various ways to reduce sodium in canned foods. When using canned vegetables in a recipe, instead of adding salt, use the salt that is contained in their canning liquid. Or, you can rinse canned vegetables before adding them to recipes. A third option is to select canned vegetables that are lower in sodium.

Read labels carefully when you buy seasoning blends. For example, garlic salt is made of salt and just a little garlic powder. Using garlic powder alone is better. Some mixes, like Mrs. Dash™, are very tasty and do not contain salt. Start by using a small amount until you obtain the flavor you like.

Be careful when choosing salt substitutes, because some of them are made with potassium chloride. This compound is not healthy for all people to consume. Ask your doctor before using a substitute that contains potassium chloride.