



Salt fast facts for busy bodies

by accredited nutritionist
Catherine Saxelby

REDUCE YOUR SALT INTAKE IN 7 EASY STEPS WITHOUT LOSING OUT ON FLAVOUR!

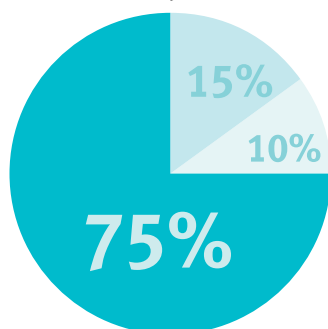
- 75% of our salt intake comes from processed foods. So buying salt-reduced and no-added salt foods will have the biggest impact on your salt intake.
- Cut out highly-salted foods such as anchovies, olives, pretzels, potato crisps, corn chips, pizza and yeast spread. They increase your desire for salty things and create a noticeable thirst which explains why they are traditionally served as nibbles with drinks.
- Sprinkle less salt at the table. This will not only help re-educate your palate, but will also cut your total sodium by 15 per cent.
- Use potassium chloride, a salt substitute, for the first few weeks. Like salt, it's a white crystalline powder that can be shaken over food. However, check with your doctor first if you have heart or kidney problems as you may retain potassium.
- Start by using half the quantity of salt that recipes demand and then reduce as you progress. Don't add salt if you're cooking with salted ingredients such as bacon, marinade, stock powder, soy sauce, oyster sauce, steak sauces or cheese. Use unsalted margarine, butter or oil when baking cakes and desserts.
- Use aromatic herbs, spices, curry powder and other aromatic ingredients such as lemon juice, orange rind, mustard powder and wine to add flavour to your cooking. Plenty of chilli, onions, garlic and shallots will really boost the taste.
- Eat more fresh food. Remember it's the processed foods (packet, canned, frozen or take away) that make up three quarters of our daily salt intake! Fresh vegetables, fish, meat, nuts, rice, pasta have very little sodium but are blessed with plenty of potassium, a complementary mineral that helps to counteract the negatives of salt.

In a nutshell – eat fresh, unprocessed foods, don't add salt at the table, use potassium chloride initially. Reduce salt in cooking and add aromatic herbs and spices to add more flavour.

HERE ARE SOME INTERESTING FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT SALT IN OUR DIET

It's not the salt shaker!

Most salt comes from everyday foods such as cheese, deli meats, butter/margarine, biscuits, takeaway food, sauces and spreads, even if they don't taste very salty.



- 75% commercial bought (processed) foods
- 15% the salt shaker and salt added during cooking
- 10% salt that occurs naturally in foods

WHAT'S THE LIMIT?

The recommended maximum daily intake for sodium is 1,600mg – less than a teaspoon of salt. The average Australian takes in anywhere from 2,500 to 4,600mg while the body actually requires very little – less than 200mg per day.





WHAT'S BEST – LOW-SALT, SALT-FREE OR SALT-REDUCED?

- » Foods labelled low-salt and low-sodium must not contain more than 120mg sodium per 100 grams.
- » No-added-salt, salt-free or unsalted foods must not contain any added salt nor any ingredient containing salt.
- » Salt-reduced foods generally have 25 or 30% less salt than their regular counterparts. Many light cheeses, cereals, margarines, sauces and cracker biscuits fit this category.

HOW SALT CREEPS IN

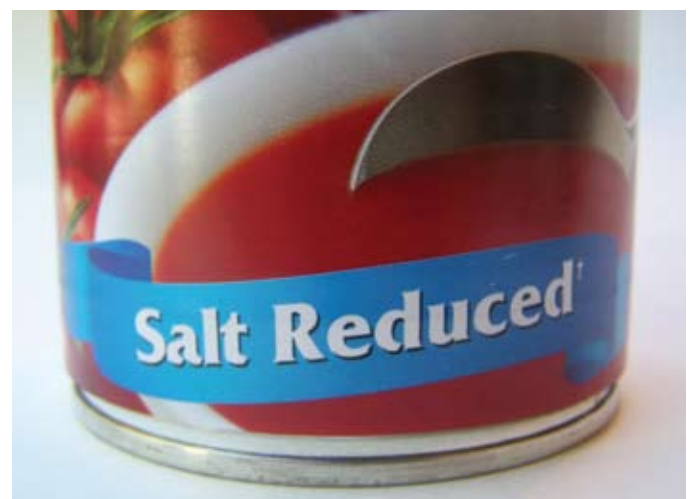
Natural unprocessed foods have very little salt but processing quickly adds it. The more processed the food, the more salt there usually is. Take a look!

LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Potato baked 1 large 200g	Hot chips 180g bucket	Potato crisps 100g packet
34mg	324mg	460mg
Pork fillet, cooked Small piece, 100g	Ham, shaved 1/2 cup	Bacon, grilled 2 rashers
72mg	778mg	1108mg
Rice boiled, no salt 1 cup	Fried rice 1 cup	Seasoned packet rice 1 cup
3mg	369mg	630mg

SALT-REDUCED – MAKE THE SWITCH AND SEE WHAT YOU'LL SAVE

FOOD	SERVE SIZE	SODIUM	YOU SAVE!
Tomato soup	1 cup, 250ml	1148mg	
Tomato soup, salt-reduced	1 cup, 250ml	388mg	760mg
Chicken stock	1 cup, 250ml	1300mg	
Chicken stock salt-reduced	1 cup, 250ml	625mg	675mg
Soy sauce	1 tbsp, 15ml	993mg	
Soy sauce, reduced	1 tbsp, 15ml	536mg	457mg
Baked Beans	1 cup, 210g	630mg	
Baked Beans, salt-reduced	1 cup, 210g	444mg	186mg
Baked Beans, no-added-salt	1 cup, 210g	40mg	590mg

An edited extract from *Nutrition for Life* by Catherine Saxelby (Hardie Grant Books).



Produced by nutritionist **Catherine Saxelby** to help busy people eat better and look after their health. You can find more handy tips, articles and quick recipes at Catherine's website www.foodwatch.com.au Catherine Saxelby is an award-winning food writer and author of *Nutrition for Life* and *Zest Cookbook* (Hardie Grant Books).

