

# LOW SALT DIET CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE



## LOW SALT DIET

Keeping a balance in nutrition is essential for everyone but even more so in people with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD).

Healthy nutritional choices and an adequate dietary intake provide you with:

- The energy to keep an active life
- The ability to maintain a healthy body weight
- The ability to effectively control blood pressure and prevent the deterioration of your renal function.

You may be advised to limit the salt intake in your diet, especially if you have high blood pressure.

### WHAT IS SALT?

The salt we use for cooking and for enhancing taste in our foods is called sodium chloride. Sodium is a mineral necessary for good health and its excess is excreted by the kidneys. When you have kidney disease your body cannot regulate fluids and sodium in your blood effectively. Therefore it is important to limit the amount of salt in your diet.

## LOW SALT DIET

### WHY IS EATING TOO MUCH SALT UNHEALTHY?

Too much salt in your diet can make you thirsty and you will drink more. This effect can be a problem if you are on fluid restriction. Too much salt can cause your body to retain extra fluid (oedema) and raise your blood pressure, leading to an increased risk of heart disease and stroke.



### WHAT FOODS CONTAIN SALT?

Salt is naturally present in almost every food item, but processed foods can contain high levels of salt. For example:

- Salty cheese
- Salty snacks (chips, crisps, nuts, pop corn)
- Margarine or butter with salt
- Smoked meat, or fish
- Tinned fish or vegetables
- Concentrated tomato juice
- Olives
- Mayonnaise
- Taste enhancers
- Baking powder
- Fast foods, processed and convenience foods such as pizza, kebabs, hamburgers.

## LOW SALT DIET

### WHAT IS A LOW-SALT DIET?

For a healthy diet, a salt (sodium) restriction of no more than 6g (2.4g) per day is recommended. However, in some heart conditions a strict restriction of 3.8g of salt (1.5g sodium) per day may be indicated.

#### REMEMBER:

- To get from sodium to salt, you multiply the amount of sodium by 2.5 (Salt = sodium x 2.5).
- 1 level teaspoonful of salt weighs approximately 5.8g which is the equivalent of 2.3g of sodium.
- 1gram (g) = 1000milligrams (mg).

## LOW SALT DIET

### HOW DO YOU KNOW IF A FOOD PRODUCT IS LOW OR HIGH IN SALT?

You can find out from the food label of the packaging or container. It will be marked salt (or sodium) content:

- Low is 0.3g salt or less per 100g of product (0.1g sodium or less)
- High is more than 1.5g salt per 100g of product (more than 0.6g sodium)

Source:

[http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/labellingnutrition/claims/nutrition\\_claims\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/labellingnutrition/claims/nutrition_claims_en.htm)

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/salt.aspx>

Some packaging uses 'traffic light' colours to display salt and other nutrition contents:

- Green = low (OK)
- Amber = medium (beware)
- Red = high (limit)

It will help to remember the portion/size of the food eaten and calculate the salt content accordingly. For instance, remember that if you eat a lot of the food choice from the amber group (medium salt content), your consumption of salt will be high.

## LOW SALT DIET

### WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO CUT DOWN ON SALT?

- Avoid adding salt to food at the table
- Boil pasta, rice, vegetables and legumes without adding salt to the boiling water
- Add lemon juice or white wine to the food to give extra taste without salt
- Rinse tinned food, if possible, with water before cooking
- Decrease the amount of salt in recipes to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the amount stated
- Choose frozen vegetables without added salt, instead of tinned ones.
- Look for foods with the labelling “low in salt” or even better “without salt”
- Try to find bread without salt or make your own bread without adding salt.
- Check the food labels of packed or tinned foods. If a food item contains 0.3g (0.1g sodium) per 100g/100ml of product, it is considered to be low in salt. Refer to the example below:

## LOW SALT DIET

Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size 1 cup (85g) (3 oz)		
Servings per container 2.5		
Amount per serving		
Kilocalories: 45      Kilocalories from Fat: 0		
		% Daily Value *
Total Fat	0g	0%
Saturated Fat	0g	0%
Cholesterol	0mg	0%
Sodium	55mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate	10g	3%
Dietary Fibre	3g	12%
Sugars	5g	
Protein	1g	
Vitamin A	360%	Vitamin C 8%
Calcium	2%	Iron 0%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000Kcal diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calories needs.		
	Kilocalories	2,000      2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g      85g
Sat. Fat	Less than	20g      25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg      300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg      2,400mg
T. Carbohydrate	Less than	300mg      375mg
Dietary Fibre	Less than	25g      30g
Kilocalories per gram:		
Fat:	9 Kcal	Carbohydrate: 4 Kcal      Protein: 4 kcal

Ingredients: Carrots

This package contains 85g of the product. The sodium content on the label shows 55mg (0.055g). To find out the

amount of sodium for 100g of this product:

$100 \times 55\text{mg} = 5,500$  and then divide by 85 = 64mg.

This food therefore contains 64mg (0.064g) of sodium per 100g so it has low sodium content (i.e. less than 0.12g).

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### HOW CAN YOU ENHANCE THE TASTE OF YOUR FOOD?

You can use all types of herbs and spices to give taste to your food such as:

- Sweet paprika or cayenne: beef, poultry, seafood, soups, sauces and most vegetables.
- Celery: meat, fish, poultry, soup, salads and dressings, assorted vegetables such as leek and cabbage.
- Nutmeg: creamy sauces or béchamel and in all vegetables other than those of the family of cabbage.
- Mint - Basil: poultry, fish, meat dishes with tomato, cooked vegetables, pasta, soups and salads.
- Thyme - Oregano: poultry, fish, meat, sauces, steamed vegetables, pasta, soups, salads and grilled meats.
- Dill: fish, creamy soups, potatoes, green beans, peas, spinach, carrot, egg and lemon sauce.
- Parsley: almost all dishes, salads and sauces.
- Rosemary: meat (especially lamb), poultry, fish, and casseroles.
- Cinnamon, allspice, bay leaves, cloves: almost all types of meat and especially the sauce.



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- Cumin: as above, but has a more intense scent.
- Curry, coriander: cooked meats, marinades, in different fish sauces.
- Tarragon: with fish, asparagus, beets, cabbage, cauliflower and in marinades
- Ginger: with beef, chicken, pork, green beans, cauliflower and eggplant.

### Caution!

Do not use salt substitutes. These products contain potassium chloride and can raise your blood potassium levels.

## LOW SALT DIET

### IN ADDITION TO CUTTING DOWN ON SALT, TRY TO FOLLOW A HEALTHY DIET:

- Limit saturated fat intake, by choosing low fat dairy foods, removing visible fat from meat and skin from poultry (preferably before cooking)
- Avoid cooking with butter. Use olive oil or vegetable fat (e.g. low salt margarine) in cooking and in all food preparations.
- Limit red meat intake and avoid consuming more than 150-180g of meat per day
- If you have been advised to limit your potassium intake make sure you choose fruit and vegetables of low or medium content in potassium and avoid the high potassium ones. (See “Low-potassium diet”)



Eat less & occasionally: high salt and fat contents

## LOW SALT DIET

### WHERE CAN YOU GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT LOW-SALT DIETS?

You can ask for more information from your dietitian at your Kidney Clinic. Some reliable websites:

- [http://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/uploads/publications\\_documents/GDAs\\_-\\_Guideline\\_Daily\\_Amounts.pdf](http://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/uploads/publications_documents/GDAs_-_Guideline_Daily_Amounts.pdf)
- <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/salt.aspx>
- [http://www.sacn.gov.uk/pdfs/sacn\\_salt\\_final.pdf](http://www.sacn.gov.uk/pdfs/sacn_salt_final.pdf)
- <http://www.nutrition.gov/whats-food/salt-sodium>

### KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Sodium forms part of the salt we use to enhance taste in foods and is present naturally in most foods.
- A low-salt diet helps to improve your blood pressure and reduce your risk of developing heart disease or stroke.
- Avoid adding salt to cooking or at the table.
- Salt intake not more than 6g (sodium 2.4g) per day is recommended.
- Tinned, cured and processed foods contain high amount of salt/sodium

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Text: Liana Poulia, PhD, Clinical Dietitian - Greece.

Review: Karen Jenkins, RN, PG Dip HE, MSc Health and Social Care (Nursing) - UK,  
Lesley Bennett, RN, RM, BA, MSc - UK

Illustrations: Miquel Àngel Velasco Martín, PhD (Cotemporary History), Watercolourist. Barcelona,  
Catalunya – Spain (renal patient).