

Salt

Fact sheet

Sometimes the two terms, "salt" and "sodium" are used interchangeably, but in theory this is not correct. "Salt" is sodium chloride. By weight, it is 40% sodium and 60% chloride. Sodium is found in most foods as sodium chloride (approximately 90%) but it is also present in other food additives such as sodium bicarbonate and monosodium glutamate (MSG).



Good nutrition is part of the Nestle heritage

Here at Nestle we have a dedicated team of dietitians and nutritionists helping people enjoy healthy foods and the benefits of a healthier lifestyle.

Visit www.nestle.nutrition.com today.

Receive a FREE copy of our "Get Out! Get Active! Get Healthy!" booklet for kids. <http://www.nestle.com.au/Fun/GetOutGetActive>



The official AIS Survival Cook Books, each feature a superb collection of recipes perfect for busy families who want healthy and tasty food <http://www.nestle.com.au/Recipes/Survival>



WHY DO WE NEED SALT?

Sodium is an essential nutrient. It is required for the maintenance of blood pressure (BP), and for the generation and transmission of electrical impulses in nerves and muscles and the uptake of certain nutrients from the small intestine.

HOW MUCH DO WE NEED?

The recommended dietary intake (RDI) for sodium in adults is 920-2,300mg per day.¹ This is equivalent to 6g salt or 1 ½ teaspoons. Australians consume, on average, about two times this amount.

WHICH FOODS CONTAIN SALT?

Sodium is found naturally in many foods, but is also added to many foods because of its preservative and flavouring properties.

Australians consume:

- › 75 % from processed foods
- › 15 % from use at the table and in cooking
- › 10 % (or less) from fruit, vegetables and meat.

WHY IS EXCESS SALT BAD?

The major adverse effect of increased salt intake is elevated blood pressure, a risk factor for cardiovascular and renal diseases. Blood pressure increases progressively in a dose-dependent relationship with salt. High blood pressure becomes more common with age and by 70 years almost half the population require medication. Of all the Australians with high blood pressure, the elderly are more likely to benefit from a lower salt intake.^{2,3}

Excessive sodium intake has also been linked to other medical conditions such as:

- › Heart failure
- › Kidney problems and kidney stones
- › Oedema
- › Stroke
- › Gastric cancer
- › Left ventricular hypertrophy
- › Osteoporosis (due to increased calcium excretion)

IODISED SALT?

Some table salt is iodised, which means a small amount of iodine is added. Iodine is needed to make thyroid hormones and iodine deficiency can retard development and growth. Using iodised salt is important in areas where natural levels of iodine in the soil are low and the iodine is not being obtained from the soil by vegetables. Sea salt does not contain iodine.

There is some emerging research to suggest that iodine intake is decreasing due to soil depletion of this mineral in areas of Australia. The mandatory fortification of foods with iodine is being considered by Food standards Australia and NZ to prevent iodine deficiency.

HOW DO I REDUCE MY SALT INTAKE?

- › Choose low-salt foods, that is with a sodium content up to 120 milligrams per 100 grams¹. Fresh foods such as fruit, vegetables, meat, milk and yoghurt are usually low in sodium where as most manufactured foods are high in sodium.
- › Choose reduced salt, low salt, no added salt and unsalted varieties of foods. The sodium content will be listed in the nutrition information panel
- › Limit foods that are high in salt such as
 - › Preserved meats such as bacon, ham, corned beef, sausages & frankfurts
 - › Canned and packet soups, sauces, salad dressings
 - › Yeast & meat extracts, meat pastes, smoked fish, anchovies and oysters
 - › Breads & some breakfast cereals
 - › Butter and margarine (unless using unsalted)
 - › Hard cheeses, (ricotta, cottage, mozzarella and Swiss cheeses are lower in salt than most other cheeses)
 - › Olives, gherkins and pickled vegetables
 - › Snack foods and fast foods e.g. pies, sausage rolls, potato chips and salted nuts
- › Avoid adding salt to cooking and at the table. Use herbs and spices such as garlic, oregano and lemon juice to add flavour to meals. NB: Sea salt, onion, celery or garlic salts are not low sodium substitutes

People used to a higher salt intake will initially crave the taste of salt when they begin a lower salt intake. However the palate adjusts to lower sodium levels, and people will find that their ability to taste the salt at much lower levels increases. Changes are usually noticed within a week and continue to develop for many months.

References

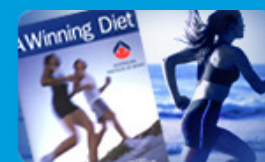
1. National Health and Medical Research Council NHMRC, Nutrient Reference Values for Australia and New Zealand including Recommended Dietary Intakes (2006), Commonwealth of Australia, 9 September 2005.
2. National Health and Medical Research Council NHMRC, Dietary Guidelines for Australians (1999), Page 126-140, Commonwealth of Australia.
3. National Health and Medical Research Council NHMRC, Eat Well for Life: A Practical Guide to the Dietary Guidelines for Older Australians (2005), Page 24-25, Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care



Over 400 delicious recipes to choose from. Visit our website : www.nestle.com.au/Recipes to find your new favourite.



The AIS 'A Winning Diet' is a FREE booklet to help you perform at your best <http://www.nestle.com.au/Nutrition/SportsNutrition/Winning>



Nestlé has always maintained a commitment to advances in nutrition and is continuing this through its partnership with the Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) and the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS)