



## Tips For Limiting Sodium Intake

---

### Why Lower Sodium?

One of the most common things your provider may ask you to do to manage your heart failure is to reduce the amount of sodium in your diet. High sodium levels cause the body to retain fluid, which increases the heart's workload. Fluid retention often causes other symptoms including weight gain, high blood pressure, difficulty breathing and swelling of the feet, ankles or abdomen.

### Where salt hides

You may be surprised by some of foods that typically have high salt content. They include most processed foods found on grocery store shelves — highly processed cheeses, breads, cereals and luncheon meats are notorious, as are prepared foods such as baked goods, frozen foods and canned goods. Check the labels!

### What does “low salt” mean?

Every patient is different. Before you make any dietary changes, ask your doctor or nurse for the daily sodium recommendation that's best for you.

---

## 4 Ways to Reduce Sodium in Your Diet

### 1. *Stop adding salt to your food.*

You can decrease your sodium intake by as much as 30 percent by not adding any salt when cooking meals and by taking the salt shaker off your kitchen counter or dinner table. Dining out? Ask if your meal can be prepared without salt.

### 2. *Shop for low sodium versions of your favorite foods.*

Many popular brands offer lower sodium varieties. But be careful. “Lower sodium is a relative term. For example, low sodium soy sauce can still be very high in sodium.

### 3. *Eat foods that are naturally low in sodium.*

Raw or steamed fresh vegetables are a good example.

### 4. *Read food labels.*

When shopping, take the time to check the nutritional information provided on the packaging. In addition to sodium, pay attention to the recommended serving size. Given the choice, steer toward foods with fewer preservatives.

---

## What About Flavor?

Low sodium does not mean “low flavor.” Here are some common substitutes that can add pizzaz to your favorite dishes. (One quick word about salt substitutes — DO NOT use potassium-based salt substitutes ( those with “potassium” or “potassium chloride” on the ingredient list) without consulting your health provider.

- Fresh lemon
- Fresh or dried herbs (make sure salt or sodium are not on the ingredient list)
- Black, cayenne or flavored pepper
- Balsamic or other flavored vinegars
- Salt-free seasoning mixes and marinades

It may take some time to adjust to a low sodium diet, but it is worth the effort. A low sodium diet can help you feel better and allow your heart failure medicines to work more effectively.

### Looking for Heart Healthy Recipes?

Check out dozens of delicious low sodium salads, entrees — and even desserts

[CormeumApp.com/heart-friendly-recipes](http://CormeumApp.com/heart-friendly-recipes)

