Missouri Call to Action:
SHOW ME LESS SODIUM!

Where Does Sodium Come From?
Most of the sodium in our diet comes from salt (sodium chloride). Using less salt when cooking and at the table will help, but we get the majority of sodium in our diet from processed and restaurant foods.

In 2012, over 32% of all Missouri adults reported they have high blood pressure.\(^1\)

How Much Salt is Too Much?
According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010, most adults should reduce their sodium intake. The average American consumes over 3,400 mg of sodium each day. However, the recommended amount for the general population is less than 2,300 mg of sodium per day\(^2\). In addition, it is particularly important to reduce sodium intake if:
- You are 51 years of age or older.
- You are African American.
- You have high blood pressure.
- You have diabetes.
- You have chronic kidney disease.

Half of the U.S. population falls into one of the above categories, but everyone can benefit from reduced sodium consumption.

\[ 1 \text{ Teaspoon} = 2400 \text{ mg of SALT} \]

Too Much Salt Is Harmful!
Too much sodium can increase blood pressure. High blood pressure is the leading cause for stroke and a major cause for heart attack. It is also a major risk factor for kidney disease. Reducing sodium intake lowers blood pressure.

How are Sodium and Potassium Related?
An important factor regarding sodium and blood pressure control is the amount of potassium in our diet. If potassium intake is low, then blood pressure will rise even higher in response to sodium. Unfortunately, potassium intake is often low in the average person’s diet.

Eating more fruits and vegetables can help reduce blood pressure. They are naturally low in sodium and high in potassium. As you reduce your sodium intake, increase your potassium intake to 4,700 milligrams (mg)/day.

Primary Sources of Sodium in the Average U.S. Diet


What Can Be Done to Reduce Sodium Intake?

Individual level:
- Start by knowing recommended limits for daily sodium intake.
- Retrain your taste buds by decreasing your salt gradually.
- Choose fresh foods rather than processed foods. If not available, choose frozen or canned with little or no salt.
- When buying processed foods, read the Nutrition Facts label and choose foods that are lower in sodium.
- When eating out in restaurants, ask for foods with little or no sodium.
- Support policy-makers who can implement policies to reduce sodium in the nation’s food supply.

Local and State Level:
- Increase public awareness about the recommended daily sodium intake and the health benefits of eating foods with lower salt.
- Implement food policies that set standards for nutrition (including sodium) at schools and businesses.

National Level:
- Policymakers can work nationally to support measures that reduce the amount of sodium found in processed and restaurant foods.

Stop and rethink your choices!

The Salty Seven: Top sources of salt in the average American diet

Poultry  Bread and rolls  Hot dogs and sausage
Sandwiches  Cold Cuts
Pizza  Chips and Pretzels

For more information regarding individual, state, and national efforts to reduce salt intake, please visit:

Missouri Council For Activity and Nutrition at http://extension.missouri.edu/mocan/skipsalt/
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/salt

Look at the nutrition facts label below for a generic bag of barbeque potato chips and notice the high calorie, total fat, saturated fat, and sodium content per serving.

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1 bag 7 oz 198g (198g)
Amount Per Serving
Calories 972  Calories from Fat 558
% Daily Value*
Total Fat 64g  99%
Saturated Fat 16g  80%
Trans Fat
Cholesterol 0mg  0%
Sodium 1485mg  62%
Total Carbohydrate 105g  35%
Dietary Fiber 9g  35%
Sugars
Protein 15g

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