

Extension

March 2012 Newsletter

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Thank you to Colorado State University Extension of Denver County for support of the Spanish translation of Family Matters.

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We have a taste for salt and sodium...

By Glenda Wentworth, Family & Consumer Science Extension Agent, Eagle County

Sodium is an essential mineral. It is needed by the body in small amounts, unless considerable sweating occurs. Sodium is mostly consumed as salt (sodium chloride). These terms are often used in place of one another.

There is a link between sodium intake and high blood pressure. Keeping blood pressure in the normal range is important. It helps reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease. Adults and children should limit their intake of sodium to reduce the risk of major chronic diseases.

A new key recommendation is to reduce sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams (about 1 teaspoon of salt) per day. It would be best to reduce intake of sodium to 1,500 mg among children (2 years of age and older) and most adults. Individuals with high blood pressure, diabetes, or kidney disease should not consume any more than 1,500 mg per day.

Salt is used for multiple reasons in baking, curing meat, retaining moisture, and flavor. Most sodium comes from adding salt during the processing of food. Many types of processed or "convenience foods" add to a high consumption of sodium.

Tips for Success:

Compare the cost of convenience foods with foods made from scratch. "Convenience foods" are products like baked pastries, frozen meals, and vegetables with seasonings and sauces. Most of these items cost more than similar foods prepared at home. Also, you can use less fat, sugar, and salt in food you cook at home.

Eat more fresh foods. Vegetables and fruits are usually lower in sodium. Eat processed foods less often and in smaller portions.

Enjoy foods prepared at home; you have more control over limiting the amount of salt when you prepare your own foods. Add seasonings that contain no-salt when cooking or eating foods.



Flavor foods with herbs, spices, and other non-salt seasonings. Make your own seasonings instead of using pre-packaged seasoning mixes. Try spices, herbs, garlic, vinegar, or lemon juice to season foods. Use black or red pepper, basil, curry, ginger, or rosemary.

Condiments are often high in sodium. Go easy on condiments like soy sauce, ketchup, pickles, olives, tartar sauce, and salad dressings.

When eating at restaurants, ask the server to have your food prepared without added salt. Also, ask that sauces and salad dressings be served on the side so you regulate how much to use.



Let's Talk:

Get the whole family to read the Nutrition Facts label for information on the sodium content of foods. Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals. Then choose the foods with lower numbers. Look for foods labeled “low sodium,” “reduced sodium,” or “no salt added.”

Recipe for Health: Baked Spicy Fish

Ingredients:

Cod fillets, fresh or frozen 1 pound
Paprika 1/4 teaspoon
Garlic powder 1/4 teaspoon
Onion powder 1/4 teaspoon
Pepper 1/8 teaspoon
Ground oregano 1/8 teaspoon
Ground thyme 1/8 teaspoon
Lemon juice 1 tablespoon
Margarine, melted 1-1/2 tablespoons



1. Thaw frozen fish according to package directions.
2. Preheat oven to 350° F.
3. Separate fish into four fillets or pieces. Place fish in ungreased 13- by 9- by 2-inch baking pan.
4. Combine paprika, garlic and onion powder, pepper, oregano, and thyme in small bowl. Sprinkle seasoning mixture and lemon juice evenly over fish. Drizzle margarine evenly over fish.
5. Bake until fish flakes easily with a fork, about 20 to 25 minutes.

4 Servings, about 3 ounces each-PER SERVING:

Calories 140
Total fat 5 grams
Saturated fat 1 gram
Cholesterol 51 milligrams
Sodium 123 milligrams

Retrieved on December 27, 2011 from

<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/FoodPlans/MiscPubs/FoodPlansRecipeBook.pdf>

Recipes and Tips for Healthy, Thrifty Meals

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