

Sodium Content of Your Food*



This table compares the sodium level of some types of foods.

Some Major Points about the Table

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unprocessed grains are naturally low in sodium. Ready-to-eat cereals vary widely in sodium content. Some have no salt added at all. Others are higher in sodium than most breads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most fresh meats, poultry and fish are low in sodium. Canned poultry and fish are higher. Most cured and processed meats such as hot dogs, sausage, and luncheon meats are even higher in sodium because sodium is used during processing to preserve them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and fruit juices are low in sodium. Most canned vegetables, vegetable juices and frozen vegetables with sauce are higher in sodium than fresh, frozen, or canned ones cooked without added salt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most "convenience" foods are quite high in sodium. Frozen dinners and combination dishes, canned soups and dehydrated mixes for soups, sauces and salad dressing contain a lot of sodium.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A serving of milk or yogurt is lower in sodium than most natural cheeses, which vary widely in their sodium content. Processed cheeses, cheese foods and cheese spreads contain more sodium than natural cheeses. Cottage cheese falls somewhere between natural and processed cheeses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many low- or reduced-sodium foods are appearing on supermarket shelves as alternatives to those processed with salt and other sodium-containing ingredients. Check the label for the sodium content of these foods.

A Short Guide to Compare Sodium Content of Food					
	<u>Meats & Meat Substitutes</u>	<u>Grain Products</u>	<u>Fruits & Vegetables</u>	<u>Dairy Products</u>	<u>Miscellaneous Foods</u>
Higher Sodium Sources	Processed luncheon meats Sausage Hot dogs	Saltine crackers Snack/specialty crackers Instant hot cereal	Sauerkraut Canned pork 'n' beans Vegetables in cheese sauce	Processed cheese Process cheese food Buttermilk	Chips & pretzels Canned soups Instant pudding Coating mixes for meat
Medium Sodium Sources	Eggs Peanut butter	Biscuits Dry cereal Homemade pastry Quick cooking cereal	Canned vegetables Tomato juice Mixes vegetables Dried fruit with sodium benzoate		
Lower Sodium Sources	Fresh meat & poultry	Unsalted crackers "No salt added" instant, cooked & dry cereal Instant rice	Fresh & frozen vegetables Fresh, canned & frozen fruit	Fresh milk Low sodium milk Sour cream Whipping cream	Unsalted popcorn Homemade soup Unsalted pretzels & chips Mayonnaise Hard candy Vinegar Herbs & spices Sugar Salt substitutes

Sodium Content of Common Foods (in mg)

Meat, Poultry, & Fish	mg	Dairy Products	mg
Sirloin steak (3 oz)	53	Butter, salted (1Tbsp)	116
Baked salmon (3 oz)	55	Milk (1 cup)	122
Chicken breast (3 oz)	64	Sour cream (1 cup)	123
Ground beef patty (4 oz)	87	Margarine (1 Tbsp)	134
Chicken leg, fried (2.5 oz)	194	Buttermilk (1 cup)	257
Tuna, canned (3 oz)	468	Cheddar cheese (1 cup)	701
Hot dog (1)	504	Cottage cheese (1 cup)	911
Salami (2 slices)	607	Parmesan cheese (1 cup)	1861
Fast food hamburger (4 oz)	763		
Corned beef (3 oz)	802	Snacks, Drinks, Condiments, Desserts	
Ham, canned (3 oz)	908	Orange juice (1 cup)	2
Smoked salmon (3 oz)	1700	Peanuts, unsalted (1 cup)	22
Soups, Vegetables, Fruit		Chocolate fudge (1 oz)	54
Apple (1)	0	Diet cola, with saccharin	75
Banana (1)	1	Club soda (12 oz)	78
Mixed vegetables, frozen (1 cup)	64	Potato chips (10)	94
Mixed vegetables, canned (1 cup)	243	Mustard (1 Tbsp)	129
Chicken noodle soup, canned (1 c)	1106	Ketchup (1 Tbsp)	156
Tomato sauce, canned (1 cup)	1482	Baked custard (1 cup)	209
Sauerkraut (1 cup)	1560	Hard pretzel (1)	258
		Shortbread cookies (2)	300
Breads and Grains		Chocolate pudding (1 cup)	180
Oatmeal, cooked (1 cup)	2	Apple pie (1 slice)	476
Wheat bread (1 slice)	106	Peanuts, salted (1 cup)	626
Italian bread (1 slice)	176	Vegetable juice (1 cup)	883
Bagel (1)	245	Dill pickle (1)	928
English muffin (1)	378	Pretzels twists (10)	966

Getting the Facts

Where is Sodium Found in My Diet?

Sodium is in many foods you eat. It may occur naturally in a food or be added during processing, cooking or at the table. Most sodium added during processing comes from salt, but other ingredients and additives used by manufacturers contain sodium as well. Salt is second only to sugar in the amount added by manufacturers to the foods Americans eat.

Foods that provide significant amounts of sodium in the diets of Americans (excluding sodium added during cooking or at the table) include bread and bakery products, cured and processed meats, canned vegetables and milk products, especially many cheeses. Estimating the actual sodium content of diets is difficult because of the variable amounts of sodium people add to foods during cooking and at the table.

Sodium is also found in many other ingredients used in food processing. Examples of sodium-containing ingredients and their uses in foods are:

Baking powder—leavening agent

Baking soda—leavening agent

Monosodium glutamate—flavor enhancer

Sodium benzoate—preservative

Sodium caseinate—thickener and binder

Sodium citrate—buffer, used to control acidity in soft drinks and fruit drinks

Sodium nitrite—curing agent in meat, provides color, prevents botulism (a food poisoning)

Sodium phosphate—emulsifier, stabilizer, buffer

Sodium propionate—mold inhibitor

Sodium saccharin—artificial sweetener

Should a Person on a Weight Control Diet Be Concerned with Sodium?

Sodium contains no calories itself since it is a mineral. However, overweight persons are often prone to hypertension and should limit sodium for that reason.

Are Carbonated Beverages High in Sodium?

"Pop" is thought to be much higher in sodium than it really is. The average amount of sodium in 12 ounces of regular pop is 126 milligrams, and in 12 ounces of sugar-free pop it is 41 milligrams. Specific brands vary little from these levels.

What About Salt Substitutes?

Salt substitutes are not for everyone, but they may be helpful for some people trying to reduce their sodium intake. Many salt substitutes contain potassium in place of all or part of the sodium. People under medical supervision, particularly for kidney problems, should check with their physician before using these salt substitutes.

Some salt substitutes contain neither sodium nor potassium but instead are mixtures of spices and herbs. These, as well as homemade seasoning blends, can be used to flavor foods without added sodium. See the spice guide included in this module for some suggestions, and try seasoning some of your favorite recipes with more herbs and spices and less salt.

About Condiments-- Watch out for commercially prepared condiments, sauces, and seasons when preparing and serving foods for you and your family. Many, like those below, are high in sodium.			
Onion salt	Soy sauce	Celery salt	Steak sauce
Garlic salt	Barbecue salt	Seasoned salt	Catsup
Meat tenderizer	Mustard	Bouillon	Worcestershire sauce
Baking powder	Salad dressings	Baking soda	Pickles
Monosodium glutamate (MSG)	Relish		

* From Community Hospitals Indianapolis Dietary Department