

What is salt?

Salt is also known as sodium.

- Salt makes it harder for your body to get rid of water.
- Extra fluid in your body puts added strain on your heart, making it work harder.

Ask your health care provider's advice about your daily salt limit.

Where to start?

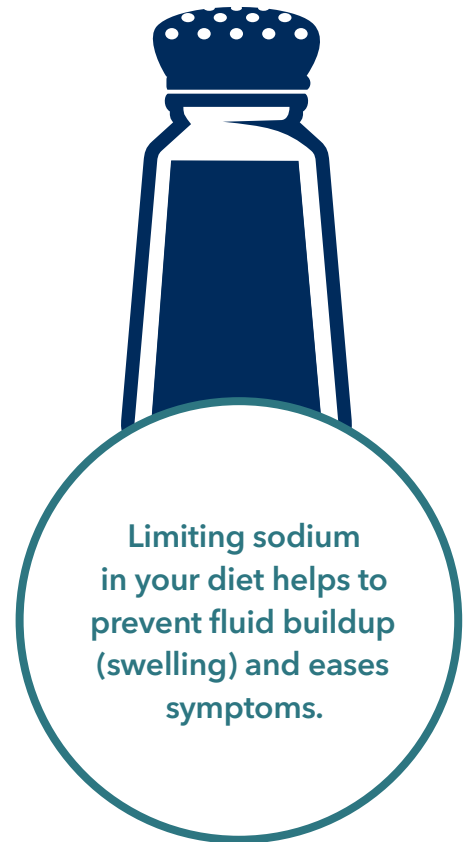
Eating heart healthy foods with limited salt (sodium) is important if you have heart failure. But it's not always easy to know where to start.

Many people say knowing how to cut out salt is one of their biggest challenges. It can take time to take an honest look at your eating habits and find ways to make changes. It may be even harder if you enjoy eating out and/or often find yourself needing to grab food on the go.

Keep in mind, it's not just about the kinds of foods we choose to fuel our body. How your food is prepared, whether it's fried or loaded with added fat and salt, matters too.

Here are 7 things to keep in mind:

- 1. There are now many heart healthy eating plans.** Low salt is best for heart failure. But if you are like many people with heart failure, you may have other existing conditions that may require you to follow additional dietary advice for what to eat. It can be hard to balance all of the information you receive, so be sure to ask questions.



Health Condition	Dietary focus is often on:
Diabetes	low sugar, low carbohydrate
Coronary artery disease (blockages in the heart's arteries)	low cholesterol
Heart failure	low salt

- 2. Pick foods that are naturally low in sodium.** For example, fresh fruits and vegetables. In fact, most raw foods are low in sodium. It's in the packaging and preparing of foods when salt is most often added. Some common culprits are canned foods, hot dogs, deli meats, crackers, chips, restaurant food and many dressings and condiments. If you use canned foods, it's a good idea to rinse them before eating.
- 3. Ditch the salt shaker** and other spices that are high in sodium (garlic salt, paprika, etc.). Opt to add flavor using herbs, lemon juice and other spices instead.
- 4. When eating out, ask the server what dishes have little or no salt.** Better yet, ask if the chef can prepare a meal with no salt. If you are comfortable doing so, you can explain why. Choose a salad or fresh vegetables instead of fries.
- 5. Make it a habit to read food labels.**
Choose items that are labeled:
 - Low sodium
 - No salt added
 - Sodium free











Reading labels will also help you learn what foods are high and low in sodium. Look for hidden sodium in processed and prepared foods. Try to:

 - Count your sodium intake using food labels for a few days to get a general idea of how much you are eating or
 - Consider using a food app that can help you do this
- 6. Talk about barriers.** If you are having a hard time affording healthy food options, tell your care team and ask about setting up a referral with a social worker as they often know of community resources to help you.
- 7. Remember that healthy eating can be a family affair.** The more support you have in dishing up low salt foods, the more successful you will be. Plus, it's good for everyone.

Most of the sodium in our diet is already in the processed and prepared foods we eat. In fact, the salt we add to our food accounts for only a small portion of the total sodium we actually eat.

Why slash the salt?

Limiting sodium in your diet helps to prevent fluid buildup (swelling) and eases heart failure symptoms. Talk with your care team about your daily salt limit.

Limit these foods:	Choose these food instead:
 Hot dog, cheeseburger, deli meats	 Lean meat and fish
 Canned vegetables	 Fresh vegetables and fruit
 Fast food/take out	 Simple balanced meal
 Condiments and salt shaker	 Herbs and seasoning
 Salty snacks	 Low fat yogurt, nuts

Top Sources of Sodium

- Breads and rolls
- Pizza
- Processed meats such as deli meats, hot dogs and bacon
- Soups
- Snack foods including crackers, pretzels and chips
- Cheese
- Chicken - believe it or not, chicken is one of the highest sources of salt!

Surprising Sources

- Sodas
- Pasta sauces, bottled salad dressings, ketchup and other condiments
- Meat dishes such as beef stew, chili, and meatloaf
- Frozen dinners

View the full list from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

Top Sources of Sodium

