

Kidney Disease: How to Keep Your Sodium Low

Sodium is a mineral that helps balance fluids in your body. It also helps your nerves and muscles work properly. Your kidneys help your body maintain the right amount of sodium. When you have kidney disease, your kidneys have trouble clearing extra sodium from your body.

What happens when you have too much sodium in your diet?

If you have kidney disease, a high-sodium diet can cause fluid to build up in your body. As a result:

- You may have swelling in your feet, legs, and belly.
- Your blood pressure may go up.
- Your heart has to work harder.
- You put extra stress on your kidneys.
- You will get thirsty, and it will be hard to limit how much fluid you drink.

Where do you find sodium?

Salt is the most common form of sodium in your diet. But table salt is only one source of sodium in your diet. Other sources of sodium include:

- Most packaged foods and drinks.
- Some medicines.

Using food labels

Get in the habit of reading food labels before you buy foods. Most food labels list how much sodium is in each serving. The amount of sodium shown on a label is based on the Daily Value (DV). If you have kidney disease, you may need less than the DV. Talk to your doctor or dietitian about how much sodium you should have each day.

Nutrition Facts	
2 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (228g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	250
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 5g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Choose foods low in sodium

Some of these tips may help when you shop for or prepare foods:

- Prepare your food at home instead of buying prepared meals, fast food, or other processed foods. It is easier for you to control the salt when you make the food yourself.
- Use fresh or frozen vegetables and fruits instead of canned ones.
- Use lemon, herbs, and salt-free seasoning blends to add flavor to your food. Do not add salt to your food.
- Ask your doctor if it is okay to use a salt substitute. If you also need to limit your potassium, salt substitutes may not be good for you. Most of them are very high in potassium.

You do not need to cut salt out of your diet entirely. But try to choose foods that are low in sodium, and avoid high-sodium foods.

Foods low in sodium	Foods high in sodium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncured meats, fish, and poultry • Fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables • Milk and milk products • Low-salt or no-salt versions of foods (canned soups and vegetables, crackers, cheese, peanut butter) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoked, cured, salted, and canned meat, fish, and poultry • Ham, bacon, hot dogs, and lunch meats • Fast food and other restaurant foods • Canned and dehydrated soups and broths • Frozen prepared meals • Salted snack foods such as crackers with salted tops and chips • Hard and processed cheese • Canned vegetables • Pickles, sauerkraut, seasonings high in salt, ketchup, and soy sauce

Do you have any questions or concerns after reading this information? It's a good idea to write them down and take them to your next doctor visit.



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