



Photos by Pixabay.com

EAT WELL, AGE WELL.

WHAT ABOUT SODIUM?

Do you ever really think about the amount of sodium in the food you eat? How much is too much? And how little is too little? The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend less than 2,300 mg. For those over the age of 51 and those of any age who are African American, have hypertension, or diabetes are recommended to consume about 1,500 mg per day.

But where does sodium come from? Most does not come from the saltshaker but from ingredients we buy at the grocery store and bring home to cook. It's not just prepackaged foods that you have to watch out for, deli meats, some cheeses, and breads are high. The more processed foods we consume, the more sodium we consume.

You can search for low sodium options in the grocery store or buy unprocessed whole foods. Eating at restaurants less is an easy way to reduce sodium intake.

There are many ways to boost flavor besides relying on salt during and after cooking. You can use citrus juices, flavored vinegars, hot peppers, herbs, and spices. You can appreciate the underlying flavor of the food more.

WEEKLY CHALLENGES

TRY TO LIMIT YOUR SODIUM INTAKE TO 2300 MG PER DAY OR LESS

PREPARE 2 MEALS WITH SPICES AND HERBS

REPLACE 2 SNACKS WITH LOW-SODIUM OPTIONS

READ FOOD LABELS FOR SODIUM CONTENT

DID YOU KNOW?

The average American consumes more than 3,400 mg of sodium per day.

Note to Nutrition Directors and Site Managers:

Thank you for helping to promote Eat Well, Age Well. Please encourage folks to form weekly action plans to help them incorporate brain foods into their eating habits. You can help create excitement to try new foods. These foods will help decrease sodium consumption and increase the nutritional value of their meals.

If they ask how they should record if they reach their weekly action plan. They can write words like, "Got it down" or just a short note like added citrus juice to my vegetables or added rosemary to my pork, etc. on the *Monthly Tracking Calendar*.

Week 1: Give out/Post

- The 1- page overview handout *What about Sodium?*
- Placemat/handout – *Vegetable and Black Bean Pasta*
- Table Tent- *Berries, Beans, and Whole Grains*
- *Monthly Tracking Calendar*

Week 2: Give out/Post

- Placemat/handouts – *Frozen Berry Smoothie*
- Table Tent- *Nutrient-Dense Foods and Limiting Sodium*

Week 3: Give out/Post

- Placemat/handouts – *Lemon Pepper Chicken*
- Table Tent- *Peas, Hummus, Herbs, and Spices*

Week 4: Give out/Post

- Placemat/handout- *Tomato Stacks*
- Table Tent- *Vegetables, Milk, and Nuts*

To print the placemats on legal size paper, just hit print, they should be set up for that size of paper. To make them into a handout, go to Print and then go down to the last item that should say, 1 page per sheet and click on the drop-down menu to select "Scale to Paper Size" and select "letter" size paper.

The table tents are available in a full-size version that you can post on a bulletin board, give as a handout or place in a full-size table tent holder or print the 4 x 6-inch version and place in a 4 x 6 or 5 x 7-inch holder.

I appreciate your input and feedback so please feel free to call me at 608-228-8095 or email me with any comments at pam.vankampen@gwaar.org