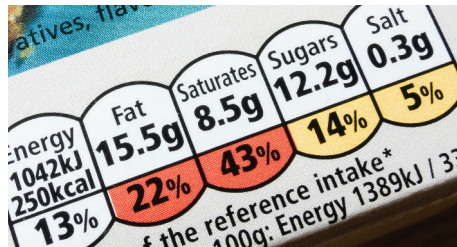


EAT LESS SALT

Most of the salt we eat (75-80%) is hidden in processed and convenience foods and food bought out of the home. Many everyday foods such as bread, meat and sauces are high in salt so try to cut down on these by reading the labels, choosing lower salt options and more fresh foods such as fish, chicken, meat, fruit and vegetables and cooking at home.

Labelling

Many of us now check labels for the salt content of the food we buy in supermarkets and shops. By looking at the label we can add up how much salt we are eating each day, and how much we are giving to our families. Most food labels now give the amount of salt the food contains either per 100 grams or per portion.



Remember that salty ingredients can add up in a meal so try to choose options that add up to less than 2g salt per meal.

Look for 'salt' on the label

Choose green labels

(less than 0.30g/100g) or occasionally

amber (less than 1.50g/100g)

Avoid red! (over 1.5g/100g or 1.8g per portion)

Download our free FoodSwitch App and start making healthy choices today!



FOODSWITCH UK

Healthy eating check list

- ✓ Eat less salt, adults should eat less than 6 grams a day
- ✓ Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day
- ✓ Taste your food - try not to add salt at the table
- ✓ Don't add salt when cooking; there are plenty of other seasonings!
- ✓ Drink plenty of water
- ✓ Always remember to check the labels and choose low salt options
- ✓ Get cooking! Homemade foods are usually healthier than restaurant and fast food
- ✓ Get active! Adults should exercise for 30 minutes 5 times a week
- ✓ Get regular blood pressure checks
- ✓ Ask the chef for "less salt please"

Adjust to less salt

Initially when you reduce your salt intake foods tend to taste bland, but after two or three weeks you will start to taste the real and delicious flavour of natural food. Give yourself time to adjust. Taste food as it really should taste!

REMEMBER, IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO REDUCE YOUR SALT INTAKE!

Everyone can benefit from a reduction in blood pressure, especially if you have already been diagnosed with high blood pressure.

Adults should eat less than 6 grams of salt per day and children should eat even less.

Recommended maximum salt intakes

Age	Maximum Salt Intake
0 - 6 months	< 1g / day
6 - 12 months	1g / day
1 - 3 years	2g / day
4 - 6 years	3g / day
7 - 10 years	5g / day
11 years and above	6g / day

When cooking for children of any age, do not add salt to their food and try not to add salt at the table. Habits formed in childhood continue through to adulthood so give your children a good start by reducing their salt intake today.

For further information on salt, cutting down your salt intake and for free low salt recipes please see our website

www.actiononsalt.org.uk



Charity registration number: 1098818



Want to learn more?
www.actiononsalt.org.uk

#eatlessalt

SALT DAMAGES YOUR HEALTH

Small amounts of salt are essential for our wellbeing. Adults need less than 1 gram per day but eat between 7 to 10 grams per day, far more than needed. The current amounts of salt eaten in the UK can have many harmful effects on our health, and therefore reducing our salt intake is very important. **Adults should eat less than 6 grams of salt, about a teaspoon per day, and children much less.**

Blood pressure

Blood pressure is the biggest risk of death in the world through the strokes and heart attacks it causes. The higher our blood pressure, the greater our risk. Salt slowly puts up our blood pressure and eating too much is responsible for many thousands of strokes, heart attacks and heart failure deaths each year in the UK. Eating less salt lowers blood pressure and reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke and heart failure.

For every one gram of salt we cut from our average daily intake there would be 6,000 fewer deaths from strokes and heart attacks each year in the UK.

Over a longer period of time, reducing salt intake will have an even greater effect as it will prevent the rise in blood pressure that occurs as we get older. It is particularly important that children do not eat too much salt, as blood pressure first starts to rise in childhood.

For further information on blood pressure, see the Blood Pressure UK website, www.bloodpressureuk.org



Stroke

Stroke is one of the largest causes of disability and the fourth biggest killer in the UK with an estimated 150,000 strokes and mini strokes each year. High blood pressure is the single most important risk factor for stroke. Salt is therefore directly responsible for many of these strokes.

Over 40% of all strokes could be prevented by tackling high blood pressure.

There is also increasing evidence that salt may have a direct effect on strokes, independent of and in addition to the effect it has on blood pressure.

For further information on strokes, see the Stroke Association website www.stroke.org.uk

Heart attacks and heart failure

Raised blood pressure is a major risk factor for coronary heart disease, heart attacks and heart failure. Coronary heart disease is the commonest cause of death in the UK. Untreated high blood pressure can also lead to heart failure, which can make the pumping action of the heart less effective.

Reducing salt intake will help to prevent high blood pressure and so reduce the risk of heart attacks and heart failure.

For further information on heart disease visit www.bhf.org.uk

Osteoporosis

Salt intake is the major factor controlling the amount of calcium in the urine and the amount of calcium lost from bones. As calcium is vital for bone strength, high salt intake may lead to weakening of the bones and an increased risk of osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis leads to bone fractures and breakages.

If we do not achieve the maximum strength of our bones when we reach our mid to late twenties, our risk of developing osteoporosis later in life is increased.

For further information see the National Osteoporosis Society website www.nos.org.uk



Obesity

Obesity is an increasing problem in the UK. Whilst salt is not the cause of obesity it increases thirst and the amount of fluids consumed, particularly sweetened soft drinks.

In the UK, nearly 2 in 3 adults and 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese.

A reduction in salt intake would cause a major reduction in the number of sweetened soft drinks being consumed, both by adults and children. Studies in the UK have shown that a reduction in sweetened soft drink consumption is likely to reduce the number of children developing obesity.

For further information on obesity visit the Action on Sugar website www.actiononsugar.org

Stomach cancer

Salt, particularly in high concentrations, damages the delicate lining of the stomach. This makes it more vulnerable to infections by *Helicobacter Pylori*, a type of bacteria that causes both stomach ulcers and stomach cancer.

Countries where people eat a lot of salty foods tend to have high rates of stomach cancer.

In countries that have a higher salt intake than we have in the UK, for example Northern China, Japan and Korea, this is a major public health problem.

For further information on cancer of the stomach see Cancer Research UK www.cancerresearchuk.org

Kidney Stones

Salt increases the amount of calcium in our urine. Reducing salt intake has been shown to reduce calcium excretion, and reduce reoccurrences of kidney stones, as kidney stones have calcium as their basic constituent.

Kidney Disease

High blood pressure has been shown to increase the amount of protein in the urine which is a major risk factor for the decline of kidney function and there is increasing evidence that a high salt intake may increase how quickly kidney disease progresses, where it is already present.

An estimated 3 million people in the UK have chronic kidney disease.

In addition, the water retention that occurs with a higher salt diet will increase blood pressure which also increases the risk of kidney disease.

For more information on kidney disease and kidney stones, visit the Kidney Research UK website www.kidneyresearchuk.org

Other effects of salt on our health

A reduction in salt intake may also be beneficial for keeping a number of other conditions under control, such as asthma and Ménière's disease.

For more information visit www.asthma.org.uk and www.menieres.org.uk

Salt reduction is recommended for people with diabetes because keeping blood pressure in the healthy range helps to reduce your risk of the long term complications of diabetes.

For more information on diabetes visit the Diabetes UK website www.diabetes.org.uk

A high salt diet can also lead to water retention. Many people with water retention, including women with premenstrual water retention, find considerable improvement in their symptoms by reducing their salt intake.

Salt can increase blood pressure and increase the risk of developing dementia including Alzheimer's disease.

For more information on Alzheimer's visit the website www.alzheimers.org.uk

