Be Salt–Safe for Your Heart

by B. Kay Sugg

Did you know that heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women? It is responsible for 1 out of every 4 deaths; every minute more than one person in our country dies from a heart disease-related event.

Most people have come to understand the role that excess sugar consumption plays in increasing the risk of heart disease and other conditions, but may not be aware that excessive salt consumption is equally dangerous.

Why does excessive salt pose a danger to your heart? The higher your salt consumption, the higher your blood pressure, which can strain your heart and damage your arteries, kidney, and brain—setting you up for heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, and dementia.

The American Heart Association recommends that Americans consume 1,500 milligrams of salt or less daily for ideal heart health, but no more than 2,300 milligrams (about one teaspoon of salt). And yet, the average amount of salt that most Americans consume daily is 3,400 milligrams.

Sodium is important to your health for its role in making nerves and muscles work properly; it is excessive amounts that cause problems. But according to the American Heart Association, more than 70% of the sodium we eat comes from processed food (supermarkets and convenience stores) and restaurant foods (25%); only about 5% is added by using table salt.

Use these strategies to monitor and control your salt intake:

Nutritional Labels

Read nutritional labels when grocery shopping and buying pre-packaged foods. Foods that contain 140 mg of sodium or less per serving are considered low in sodium; those containing 35 mg or less per serving are very low in sodium.

Restaurant Food

Eat restaurant food less frequently, and check their menus online before leaving home, as many of them have nutritional information. You can also ask the server if there are lower-salt options for the food you are ordering.

Portion Sizes

Cut back a little on portion sizes. Eating a little less will help to limit the amount of salt you consume. You can retrain your taste buds, and over time, the less sodium you eat, the less you will want.

Cook At Home

Cook more at home and use fresh vegetables instead of canned ones. Using a tomato as an illustration of the difference it makes—a whole fresh tomato contains 6 mg of sodium while one can of no-salt-added tomatoes has 20 mg per half cup, and one can of tomatoes has 220 mg per half cup.

Information Source: American Heart Association and Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

Low Sodium
No Salt Salad Dressing

INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup Low Sodium Tomato Juice
- 1/2 cup Apple Cider Vinegar
- 1 Lemon (Juice of)
- 2 tsp Mustard Powder
- 1/4 Onion chopped
- 4 packs Artificial sweetener
- 1/2 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 clove Garlic chopped
- 1/2 tsp Paprika
- 1/2 tsp Cumin

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a blender, add the tomato juice, vinegar, lemon juice, garlic, and onion and blend until pureed.
2. Add the mustard powder, cumin, paprika, and sweetener, then blend at low speed.
3. Increase the speed and slowly add the oil, blending to emulsify.
4. Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

- Prep Time: 5 mins
- Cook Time: 5 mins
- Total Time: 10 mins
- Servings: 16
- Calories: 63k cal

Source: https://www.hackingsalt.com/ low-sodium-french-dressing/