

DASH eating plan

Your eating habits can impact your blood pressure levels. If you have high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, you will benefit from the following guidelines:

- Reduce sodium and salt in your diet
- Increase fruits, vegetables, and potassium-rich foods
- Include low-fat dairy products daily for calcium
- Decrease total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol in your diet

To know if prepared foods have sodium or fat, read their food label. Look for words such as salt, sodium, fat, hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated fat. Ensure you include the number of recommended servings from the fruit and vegetable groups. These foods contain potassium, a nutrient that has been shown to decrease blood pressure.

meats, poultry, fish, eggs, and meat substitutes

choose

Limit to 5-6 ounces per day.

(3 ounces = the size of a deck of cards)

- Meat, fish, poultry, shellfish, fresh or frozen, lean meat cooked without salt
- Low sodium tuna or regular tuna that has been rinsed in water and drained
- Tofu
- Low cholesterol egg substitutes
- Healthy Choices® entrees (Frozen entrees with a starch and vegetable should not exceed 600 mg sodium.)

Nuts, Seeds, & Legumes (4-5 servings per week)

- Dried beans, peas, legumes (cooked 1/2 cup)
- Beans, canned beans, no added salt (1/2 cup)
(Canned beans should be rinsed and drained.)
- Nuts, unsalted (1/3 cup or 1 1/2 ounces)
- Seeds (2 Tbsp or 1/2 ounce)
- Peanut butter, low sodium (2 Tbsp)

do not choose

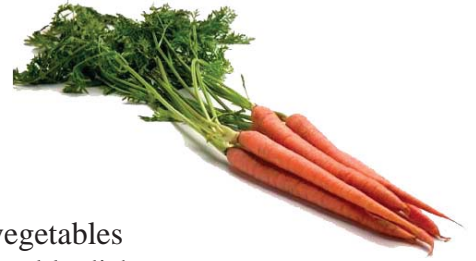
- Cured or processed meats: corned beef, Canadian bacon, bologna, cured ham, luncheon meats, sausage, jerky, hot dogs (regular and “1/3 less sodium”)
- Canned chicken, salmon, shrimp, sardines or meat
- Peanut butter
- Textured vegetable protein (TVP) products
- Frozen dinner entrees (except those listed under **choose**)
- Canned entrees, such as stews, chop suey, spaghetti



vegetables

Eat 4-5 servings a day.

(1 serving = 1 cup raw leafy, 1/2 cup cooked or chopped raw, or 1/2 cup juice)



choose

- Canned vegetables, with no added salt
- Raw vegetables
- Fresh or frozen vegetables, cooked without salt
- Instant mashed potatoes, do not add salt when preparing
- Tomato or vegetable juice, no salt added or salt free
- Tomato sauce, no salt added
- Tomato paste, no salt added

do not choose

- Baked beans
- Sauerkraut
- Pickles and pickled vegetables
- Frozen seasoned vegetable dishes
- Coleslaw and potato salad, unless homemade, without salt
- Tomato or vegetable juice
- Tomato sauce
- Tomato puree

fruits and juices



Eat 4-5 servings a day.

(1 serving = 1 medium fruit, 1/4 cup dried fruit, 1/2 cup frozen or canned fruit, 1/2 cup fruit juice)

choose

- All fruits and fruit juices

bread, cereals, grains, and crackers

Limit to 6 servings per day. Choose whole wheat or whole grain options.

choose

- Low sodium bread (1 oz)
- Yeast breads and rolls
- Bagel (1/2)
- English Muffin (1/2)
- Pita (1/2)
- Tortilla, wheat (1 - 8 inch)
- Bread dressing, homemade with no added salt (1/3 cup)
- Pancakes (1 - 4" diameter)
- Crackers, unsalted tops (5)
- Melba Toast (4)
- Dry cereal (less than 140 mg sodium per serving), except those listed under **no limit**
- Pretzels, unsalted

do not choose

- Refrigerated dough
- Danish pastries
- Toaster pastries
- Bagels with salt toppings
- Biscuit mix
- Cornbread mix
- Commercially seasoned stuffing
- Commercial popcorn
- Frozen waffles
- Crackers with salted tops

no limit

- Hot cereal, cooked without salt
- Dry cereals
 - Puffed rice or puffed wheat
 - Shredded wheat
 - Low sodium cornflakes
 - Low sodium crispy rice
- Wheat bran or wheat germ
- Crackers
 - Low sodium crackers
 - Unsalted matzoh
 - Melba toast
- Plain pasta, noodles, or rice
- Popcorn, homemade, unsalted; microwave, unsalted
- Tortilla, corn

soups

choose

- Low sodium canned soup
- Homemade soups and broth, with no added salt
- Low sodium soup bases

do not choose

- All soups and broth, unless low sodium
- "1/3 less salt" soups
- Dehydrated soup mixes



milk and yogurt

Eat 3 servings a day.

(1 serving = 1 cup milk or yogurt, 1 1/2 ounces cheese)

choose

- Milk: low-fat, fat-free, chocolate, powdered, evaporated
- Yogurt: low-fat or fat-free
- Low sodium, low fat processed cheese (e.g Alpine Lace® slices)
- Mozzarella or Swiss cheese

do not choose

- Buttermilk
- Instant hot chocolate/cocoa mixes
- Malted milk
- Processed cheese (American, cheese spread, cheese food)
- Cottage cheese
- All other natural cheeses

fats

choose

Limit to 3 servings per day

- Vegetable oils: canola, safflower, sunflower, corn, peanut, olive, soybean (1 tsp)
- Margarine with first ingredients “liquid oil” and no trans fat (1 tsp)
- Diet margarine (2 Tbsp)
- Unsalted nuts (1 oz)

Limit to 1 serving per day:

- Salad dressing: regular or fat-free (1 Tbsp)
- Mayonnaise: regular or fat-free (1 Tbsp)
- Fat-free cream cheese

do not choose

- Tartar sauce
- Bacon, bacon fat, “1/3 less sodium” bacon
- Gravy: canned, jarred or packet
- Salt pork
- Butter
- Snack dips with instant soup mixes or processed cheese
- Olives

beverages

Limit caffeine to 300 mg/day.

choose

- Coffee and tea (about 2 1/2 cups)
- Carbonated beverages, low sodium
- Mineral water
- Fruit punch, lemonade (although acceptable, limit due to sugar content)

do not choose

- Cocoa beverage mixes
- Sport beverages (such as Gatorade®)

dessert and sweets

choose

Limit to 5 servings per week

- Sugar, honey
- Jam or jelly
- Syrups: maple, corn, chocolate, etc.
- Cranberry sauce
- Hard candy
- Gelatin
- Sherbet or frozen yogurt (1/2 cup)
- Popsicles

Limit to 1 serving per week:

- Fat-free frozen desserts, cakes and cookies
- Low-fat (no-added sugar) ice cream

do not choose

- Ice cream
- Cheesecake
- Instant pudding mixes
- Commercially prepared fudge, caramel or butterscotch toppings



condiments

choose

- Herbs and spices without salt, (e.g., onion and garlic), horseradish powder, vinegar, Mrs. Dash®, Tabasco® sauce, Mrs. Dash Marinades®, Balsamic vinegar, poultry seasoning

Limit:

- Mustard (1 tsp/day)
- Worcestershire sauce (1 tsp/day)
- Ketchup (1 tsp/day)
- Salsa (1/4 cup/day)

do not choose

- Salt, herb and spice blends containing salt
- Monosodium glutamate (MSG)
NOTE: MSG has no taste so it is not detected in foods!
- Soy sauce
- Chili sauce
- Teriyaki sauce
- Relish
- Steak sauce
- Barbecue sauce
- Poppa Dash®
- Balsamic vinaigrette, commercial prepared



Eating Out

Today, many restaurants provide nutrition information about their menu items. Since most fast foods and ethnic foods (Chinese, Mexican, Italian) are high in sodium, ask to see this information before making a selection. Upon request, some fast food restaurants will accommodate your needs, such as leaving the salt off your french fries, or the ketchup off your burger. Another choice is to order a salad and add a squeeze of lemon instead of dressing, which is generally high in sodium. At restaurants that prepare foods “made to order,” ask that your meal be prepared without salt or MSG.

Food Labels

Labels can be useful.

The following are sodium labeling definitions:

- **Sodium Free** – less than 5 milligrams of sodium per serving
- **Very Low Sodium** – less than 35 milligrams per serving
- **Low Sodium** – less than 140 milligrams per serving
- **Reduced or Less Sodium** – the product has at least 25 percent less sodium than the original product
- **Light** – a product has at least 50 percent less sodium OR 1/3 fewer calories OR 50 percent less fat than the original product
- **No Salt Added or No Salt** – no salt has been added in the preparation of the product

**Caution: Many products with less sodium, less salt, lite, or light on the label still may have too much sodium.*

