Cut down on salt
It’s easy to do and good for your heart

Lower the risk of heart disease
Taste food as it should really taste
Take control
Think different
Improve long-term health
Contents

Salt and your heart 3
How much is too much? 5

Where’s the salt? 7

Always read the label 8
What do the traffic light colours mean? 9
Guideline Daily Amounts 11

Top tips for passing the salt 13
Low-salt recipe 15
More cooking tips 17

How the British Heart Foundation can help you 18
Too much of me could put you at risk...
Salt and your heart

Do you know how much salt you consume as part of your daily diet? You might be surprised to know that it’s not just the salt you add to your meal that is important, it’s also the salt which is ‘contained’ in many everyday foods.

Many people do not realise that the amount of salt they consume every day could be putting their health at risk.

Too much salt can increase the risk of developing high blood pressure, which is a risk factor for coronary heart disease. It’s important for you and your family to try not to eat more than the recommended amount of salt. This could help you to keep your heart healthy.
How much is too much?

Health experts recommend that adults should consume less than 6g of salt a day. To give you a clearer idea, one level teaspoon contains 6g of salt. If you think you may be consuming too much salt, you are not alone.

Currently, the average daily intake of salt by adults in the UK is above the recommended maximum.

The good news is that once you have all the facts about salt and your health, there are simple steps you can take to reduce your salt intake and improve your long-term health. Read on to find out how to reduce your salt intake.
Where’s the salt?

Processed foods such as canned soups, takeaways, and ready-prepared meals are prime culprits for containing high levels of salt.

A staggering 75% of a person’s dietary salt intake comes from processed foods alone.

When you are shopping in the supermarket or local shop, watch out for foods such as crisps, salted nuts, canned and packet soups and sauces, baked beans and canned vegetables, pork pies, pizzas and other ready meals that typically contain a lot of salt.

Also be aware that some staple foods such as bread and some breakfast cereals have added salt and that it can also be found in sweet foods such as cakes and biscuits. Ideally, you should try to have a balanced diet containing fresh fruit, vegetables, starchy foods such as potatoes, pasta and rice and less fat (especially saturates), salt and sugar.
Always read the label

Regularly checking the nutrition information on food labels can help you to choose healthier options for your diet.

Salt often appears as sodium on food labels (6g of salt is equivalent to 2.5g of sodium).
What do the traffic light colours mean?

Some products on sale have traffic light colours on the label to help you make your choice. With traffic light colours, you can see at a glance how much salt and other nutrients there are in every 100g of the food product.

Red = High
Amber = Medium
Green = Low

What is low or high per 100g?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LOW: a healthier choice</th>
<th>HIGH: just occasionally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>0.3g or less</td>
<td>1.5g or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>0.1g or less</td>
<td>0.6g or more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Look for the useful information to help you decide.

Always read the label
Guideline Daily Amounts

Guideline Daily Amounts (GDA) also appear on the labels of some foods and drinks. The GDA of salt for adults daily is 6g. Try not to exceed this amount.

Also avoid products that contain 40% or more of an adult’s GDA in one portion, as they will be high in salt.

Recommendations for children

There are also daily recommended maximum salt targets for children depending on their age:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Salt</th>
<th>Sodium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3 years</td>
<td>2g</td>
<td>0.8g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 6 years</td>
<td>3g</td>
<td>1.2g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 10 years</td>
<td>5g</td>
<td>2g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 and over</td>
<td>6g</td>
<td>2.5g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Always read the label
Top tips for passing the salt

Adding salt to your food while you’re cooking or at the table may seem like a hard habit to break. Here are some top tips to get you started.

- Cut down gradually and you shouldn’t notice the difference.
- Use food labels to choose lower salt options.
- Try adding less salt to your cooking (eg, when boiling vegetables, making casseroles, pasta sauces etc).
- Avoid adding salt to your meal at the table – taste it first and try adding herbs instead if you wish.
- Watch out for the salt content in snacks such as crisps and nuts and highly salted foods such as bacon, cheese, and other processed foods such as ready meals and takeaways.
- Switch salty snacks for a variety of fruit and vegetables. Aim for at least five portions a day.
- Watch out for cooking sauces (especially soy sauce) and ready mixed ‘seasonings’ as some of these are very high in salt.
TRY OUT THIS TASTY LOW-SALT RECIPE
Root vegetable curry

Serve this flavourful mixed root vegetable curry with boiled rice, or try serving it with hot fluffy couscous instead.

Preparation time: 20 minutes
Cooking time: 55 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 fresh green chilli, seeded and finely chopped
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
2.5cm (1in) piece fresh root ginger, finely chopped
2 tablespoons plain flour
2 teaspoons EACH ground coriander, ground cumin and turmeric
300ml (1/2 pint) water
200ml (7fl oz) passata
750g (1lb 10oz) mixed root vegetables such as sweet potato, swede and celeriac, peeled and diced
2 carrots, thinly sliced
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Chopped fresh coriander, to garnish

Method

1. Heat oil in large saucepan. Add onion, chilli, garlic and ginger and sauté for 5 minutes, or until softened. Stir in flour and ground spices; cook gently for 1 minute, stirring.

2. Gradually stir in water, then add passata, diced root vegetables and carrots. Season with black pepper; mix well.

3. Bring to boil, stirring, then reduce heat, cover and simmer for about 45 minutes, or until vegetables are cooked and tender, stirring occasionally.

4. Serve on warmed plates or in bowls; garnish with chopped coriander.

Top tips for passing the salt
More cooking tips

- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling fresh chillies as they contain substances that may irritate skin and eyes.
- Banish the salt pot from your table – you’ll be surprised how quickly your tastebuds adapt.
- Use spices and herbs to flavour foods rather than salt. This works well with staples such as potatoes, pasta, rice and couscous.
- Citrus fruits such as lemon and limes can add a zesty kick to fish, chicken and pork. Use them as a marinade with olive oil and garlic or simply squeeze over their juices.
- Don’t throw away your salt-free vegetable cooking liquid. Use it for gravies, soups, stews and sauces for a salt-free stock.

For more information on how to keep your heart healthy, log on to the British Heart Foundation’s website bhf.org.uk
How the British Heart Foundation can help you

We are the nation’s heart charity, dedicated to saving lives through pioneering research, patient care, campaigning for change, and providing vital information.

You might find some of the following resources helpful:

**Booklets**

**Eating well**
How to keep food fun and good for your heart

**Our heart health catalogue**
For you, for your family and friends, for health professionals

**Heart health information and services**
Helping you support your community

**Get active, stay active**
Enjoy being active and keep your heart healthy

**Be active for life**
Over 50? Keep your heart healthy with physical activity

**Take control of your weight**
Safe ways to lose weight for heart health

**Stop smoking**
How to quit for a healthy heart

**Put your heart into walking**
It’s easy, it’s free, it’s great for your heart
**DVD**

**Risking it**
This DVD follows five ordinary people, all of whom have one or more risk factors for coronary heart disease. They have decided to start taking responsibility for their health and take positive action.

**For information on other BHF booklets and DVDs ask for a copy of Our heart health catalogue.**

**How to order our resources**
To order any of our booklets or DVDs:
- call the BHF Orderline on **0870 600 6566**
- email **orderline@bhf.org.uk**
- visit **bhf.org.uk/publications**

You can also download many of our publications from our website.

Our booklets are free of charge, but we would welcome a donation so we can continue our vital work. (Turn the page to see how you can make a donation.)

**Heart Matters**
Heart Matters is our **free**, personalised service to help you live with a healthy heart. Join Heart Matters today to access benefits including **heart matters** magazine, a HelpLine and an online members’ area with recipes, articles and lifestyle tools. Register online at **bhf.org.uk/heartmatters** or call **0300 330 3300** (a local rate number).
We need your help…
to continue our life-saving work

As a charity we rely on the generosity of people like you to fund our vital work. Thousands of people with heart disease turn to us for help every year and even more will need us in the future. **We want to be there for them.**

Please donate today and together we can beat heart disease for good.

If you would like to make a donation:

- please call our donation hotline on **0300 330 3322**, 
- contact us through our website at **bhf.org.uk/donate** 
- or post it to us at the address on the back cover.

Other ways you can help

There are many other ways you can play a crucial role in our efforts to beat heart disease:

- Become a volunteer and help run our shops, events or services for local communities. To find out more, call **0845 130 8663** or visit **bhf.org.uk/volunteer**
- Have fun on a sponsored run, bike ride or walk. For more on this, call **0844 477 1181** or visit **bhf.org.uk/events**
- Join our Heartstart initiative and learn to save lives with the skills of emergency life support. Over 2.3 million people already have. For more information contact **heartstart@bhf.org.uk**
- Donate goods to your local BHF shop. To find out where your nearest BHF shop is, call **0844 412 5000**.
- Give in celebration by offering your party guests the chance to donate to us instead of buying gifts, for example for your wedding anniversary or birthday. Visit **bhf.org.uk/celebrate** for more information.

Thank you.
Have your say

We would welcome your comments to help us produce the best information for you. Why not let us know what you think? Contact us through our website at bhf.org.uk/contact. Or, write to us at the address on the back cover.

Kids and Schools

Do you want the kids in your family to be more active and eat healthier? Help them make some changes now by encouraging them to visit the following websites:

- cbhf.net
  a website for 7-11 year olds

- yheart.net and yoobot.co.uk
  websites for 12-19 year olds

Do any of the teenagers in your family have a heart condition? Visit yheart.net/meet

You can also order resources from our Kids’ and schools’ catalogue:
visit bhf.org.uk/publications,
call 0870 600 6566, or email orderline@bhf.org.uk
HEART HELPLINE

For information and support on anything heart-related

0300 330 3311 | bhf.org.uk

local rate number
Phone lines open 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday