

Sodium: The Whole Story

Learn about this mineral that plays several roles in your body!

Cutting Back on Sodium

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) provide a daily limit of **2300 mg/day** of sodium for adults and **1500-1800 mg/day** for children. Reducing sodium intake especially when intake is high, is important for overall health. **Weekly sodium targets for school meals are established based on the amounts recommend by the DGAs.**

Sodium in the Body

Sodium is an essential mineral involved in many bodily processes, including:



Balancing bodies' fluids and regulating blood pressure



Helping muscles contract



Helping cells uptake nutrients and water



Helping nerves carry brain-body messages



However, **too much** sodium is linked to high blood pressure and heart disease. Limiting sodium intake can help regulate blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart disease.

Sources of Sodium

ITEM	SODIUM (MG)
3 oz frozen chicken nuggets....	200-570
1 corn dog.....	350-620
3 oz turkey deli meat.....	450-1,050
4 oz slice frozen pizza.....	370-730
1 oz slice American cheese..	370-377

Tips to Reduce Sodium Intake

- **Consume and serve more fresh foods** - Minimally processed foods such as old-fashioned oats, natural meats and fresh fruits and vegetables have less sodium.
- **Consume and serve high-sodium foods less often** - Pre-cooked and processed items such as pizza and chicken nuggets are some of the highest sources of sodium.
- **Look for items labeled "low-sodium" or "no salt added"** - These items have less than 140 mg per serving.
- **Read Nutrition Facts Labels and ingredient lists** Aim to choose items with 140 mg of sodium or less, and limit other sources of sodium in food items such as monosodium glutamate, disodium phosphate, and sodium nitrate/nitrite.