

## Following a Low-Sodium/Salt Diet

Sodium (salt) attracts water and causes the body to retain fluid. This causes swelling and forces your heart to work harder. It is important to follow a low-salt diet every day. Even one high salt meal can make you retain fluid and increase the risk of hospitalization.

Remember, it is recommended that you eat no more than 2,000mg of sodium in a day. This is equal to about 500mg of sodium per meal.

Removing the salt shaker is the first step, but also be aware that salt is hidden in many of our foods. In fact 77% of our daily sodium intake comes from what is already IN food.

## Tips to Lower Your Sodium Intake at Home

- Read nutrition labels. Purchase foods that have less than 140mg of sodium per serving.
- Avoid processed foods including processed cheeses and meats.
- Remove the salt shaker from the table and the stove. Substitute with other seasonings and spices.
- Don't salt the cooking water and don't add salt to your cooking.
- Use fresh or plain frozen vegetables.
- If you use high-sodium condiments and salad dressings, dip your fork in them instead of pouring them on food.
- Use spice blends like Mrs. Dash or create your own spice blend.

## Tips for Eating at Restaurants

- Choose baked, broiled, grilled, poached, roasted or steamed foods.
- Limit breading, butter or sauces. Or ask for them on the side.
- Skip the bread basket.
- Eat half of your meal and save leftovers for the next day.
- Use fresh lemon or pepper to flavor vegetables, salads or baked potatoes.
- Go easy on salad dressing, or have it on the side. Use olive oil and vinegar instead which is sodium free.
- Ask for no salt added.
- Stay away from fast food restaurants.