

SENIOR NUTRITION NEWS

Eat Smart Idaho

February 2023

Sodium, Salt & Heart Health

February is American Heart Month. There is a link between sodium intake and heart health. Limit the amount of sodium and salt in your diet to help keep your heart pumping strong.

The difference between salt and sodium:

People often use the words “salt” and “sodium” interchangeably, they are not the same. “Salt” is sodium chloride which is table salt. Table salt contains sodium and is made up of 40% sodium and 60% chloride.



How much sodium can I have?

The current Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that people get less than 2,300 mg of sodium per day. Most Americans get more sodium than they need. Often getting more than 3,500 mg per day. If you have high blood pressure, discuss your specific needs with your health care provider. One teaspoon of table salt contains about 2,400 mg of sodium.

Tips on reducing your sodium intake:

- ♥ Buy fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables with no salt or sauce added.
- ♥ Limit sauces, mixes, and instant products, including flavored rice and ready-made pasta. Specifically look for those with less than 600mg of sodium per meal.
- ♥ Be sure to check the amount of sodium per serving, and don't forget to check the number of servings per container.
- ♥ Choose packaged foods labeled “low sodium,” “reduced sodium,” or “no salt added” when available.
- ♥ Compare the amount of sodium in different products by reading Nutrition Facts labels. Choose the options with the lowest amounts of sodium.
- ♥ When possible, purchase fresh poultry, fish, pork, and lean meat, over cured, salted, smoked, and other processed meats.
- ♥ When cooking, use alternatives to replace or reduce the amount of salt you use, such as garlic, citrus juice, salt-free seasonings, herbs, or spices.



Banana Oatmeal Cookies

- 2 very ripe bananas
- 1 cup oats (quick-cooking or old fashioned rolled)
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup raisins



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat oven to 350° F. Lightly grease a baking sheet.
3. In a medium bowl, mash bananas with a fork until mostly smooth.
4. Add oats, cinnamon, vanilla and raisins. Mix well.
5. Drop the dough with a teaspoon onto the baking sheet. Flatten dough with the back of a spoon or bottom of a drinking glass.
6. Bake 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool before serving.

Melon Cooler

- 2 cups cubed cantaloupe
- 1 cup low-fat lemon yogurt
- 1 cup orange juice



Wash hands with soap and water. Blend all ingredients until smooth. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/salt/food.htm>; <https://www.foodhero.org/healthy-recipes> retrieved 1/25/23

For Information on Eat Smart Idaho classes, contact the Nutrition Instructor in your county:

Panhandle: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary,
Kootenai & Shoshone Counties 208-292-2525

North Central Idaho: Clearwater, Idaho, Latah,
Lewis, & Nez Perce Counties 208-883-2267



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