



## Breaking Up is Hard To Do

I love you salt, but you're breaking my heart  
(from the American Heart Association)

Dear Salt:

You've been a part of my life since the beginning. I call you Salt and people also know you as Sodium Chloride. You play a critical role in my diet and help me maintain the correct balance of fluids in my body, but now I know I can't have so much of you. I've learned people are consuming more of you (sodium) in their diets. You are hiding in processed foods such as canned meats (e.g. Spam, Vienna sausage), canned vegetables & soups, cold cuts, cheese, breads, and instant ramen/saimin.

To make matters worse, on average, children ages 2-19 eat more than 3,100 mg of you (sodium) per day which is more than double the recommended amount by the American Heart Association. I should only be getting **1,500 mg of you (sodium) a day** for ideal heart health.

If I have too much of you that can lead to high blood pressure which is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. Let's work toward a balanced relationship for me and my friends and family.

Sincerely,

Your SweetHeart

## Want to learn more about ways to reduce sodium in your diet?

- Rinse canned vegetables – this reduces sodium by as much as 40%
- Use herbs, low-sodium spices, or no salt added spices
- Choose low sodium or no salt added food items

(For Elementary Students)

### Make better choices.

Instead of .....

Saltine crackers

Cheddar crackers

Salted pretzels

Cheddar cheese

Instant Ramen

Try these lower sodium products.....

Apple

Cucumbers with Hummus

Low-sodium or unsalted pretzels

Mozzarella cheese

Rice crackers



(For Secondary Students)

### Make better choices.

Instead of.....

Sports drink

Saltine crackers

Cheddar crackers

Three cheese pizza

Instant Ramen

Try these lower sodium products

100% fruit juice

Apple

Cucumbers with Hummus

Veggie pizzas with mozzarella cheese

Rice crackers

Sodium is an essential nutrient, but you don't need much in your diet. It adds up fast! Take bread, for example, one piece can have up to 230 milligrams of sodium, while a serving of turkey cold cuts can contain as much as 1,050 milligrams.

Find out how much sodium you are eating by using the SodiumTracker Tool.

[https://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@fc/documents/downloadable/ucm\\_448279.pdf](https://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@fc/documents/downloadable/ucm_448279.pdf)

**SODIUM TRACKER**

When recording your sodium intake, be sure to keep in mind that different brands and restaurant preparation of the same foods may have different sodium levels. To get your best estimate of sodium intake, use the sodium content on individual ingredients, then add up the total sodium levels of the same food category. To track your sodium intake, use the Sodium Tracker tool. When preparing homemade foods, check the sodium content on individual ingredients, then add up the total sodium levels of the same food category. Visit [heart.org/heartdisease](http://heart.org/heartdisease) for more information.

The American Heart Association's Heart Check tool—whether in the primary care or restaurant help shoppers see through the sodium on primary store shelves to find foods that help you build a heart healthy diet.

MEAL	FOOD	SODIUM	NOTES
Breakfast			
Snack			
Lunch			
Snack			
Dinner			
Snack			
		<b>DAILY SODIUM TOTAL</b>	

**PARENTS and CAREGIVERS:**

The taste for salt is established through diet at a young age. You can help lower sodium by influencing the way foods are produced, sold, prepared, and served.

Tips for parents:

- Model healthy eating



- Compare food labels to find the lower sodium options
- Involve your kids in meal preparation
- Before you go out to eat, look up nutrition information online to find the healthier choices.
- Support changes
- Take the pledge: <http://sodiumbreakup.heart.org/pledge/>



Visit this link for some salt myth busters:

[http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/HealthyEating/Nutrition/7-Salty-Myths-BUSTED-Infographic\\_UCM\\_456341\\_SubHomePage.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/HealthyEating/Nutrition/7-Salty-Myths-BUSTED-Infographic_UCM_456341_SubHomePage.jsp)



Take a 3-week challenge:

[http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/HealthyEating/Nutrition/Sodium-Swap-Change-Your-Salty-Ways-in-21-Days-Infographic\\_UCM\\_455060\\_SubHomePage.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/HealthyEating/Nutrition/Sodium-Swap-Change-Your-Salty-Ways-in-21-Days-Infographic_UCM_455060_SubHomePage.jsp)