

Tips for Making Low-Sodium Choices When Dining Out

- Expect restaurant foods to be higher in sodium than what you prepare at home. Even the spreads and butter that comes with your bread basket has added salt.
- Most chain restaurants will have nutrition information available about their menu items so you can select foods that are lower in sodium. Ask for a nutrition fact brochure while at the restaurant or visit the restaurant's web page on-line to look up the information at home before you go to the restaurant.
- Budget your sodium intake when you know you will be dining out. Make lower sodium food choices for your other meals of the day, anticipating a higher sodium intake when dining out.
- When ordering your menu item, request that your foods be prepared without any added salt, marinades, butters or seasonings that contain salt. For example ask for your grilled meats, fish and poultry without added salt. If the food has been pre-marinated, breaded or brined, the salt cannot be removed.
- Try to limit menu items such as soups, mashed potatoes, rice pilaf, casseroles, lasagna, or entrees with sauces, gravies, breading or processed cheese. These foods are already prepared which means you have less control of the sodium content.
- Ask for sauces, gravies or dressing on the side, so you control how much of these foods are added to your menu item.
- Do not add salt or other high sodium condiments such as soy sauce to your foods at the table.
- Limit intake of smoked or cured foods like smoked salmon or ham, salami, pastrami, turkey breast, and other lunchmeats.
- Select fresh foods such as salads, fresh vegetable plates or fresh fruit cups more often.
- Eat half or a third of the entrée and take the other portion home for another meal. Smaller portions also mean a lower sodium intake.