



# Limit Sodium

## CHALLENGE

Shake the salt habit to protect your heart

## Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read "Limit Sodium."
2. Create a plan for meals and snacks to eat less sodium.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



When Miki Sudo steps on stage this month at Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest on Coney Island in New York, she's going to be hungry ... for hot dogs. And in case you didn't know, hot dogs are one of many foods high in sodium.

Sudo is a competitive eater. She's munched her way through a mountain of high-calorie, high-sodium foods. She's devoured a massive pile of chicken wings: 178 of them! And she's last year's Hot Dog Eating champ.

What's on your menu? You're probably not going to eat anything like Sudo. But foods like hamburgers, hot dogs, pizza, and fried chicken are all high in sodium. And that's a problem if you eat foods like this a lot.

On the Fourth of July, Sudo will try to munch her way through dozens of hot dogs and buns in under 10 minutes. And she'll down about 19,000 mg of sodium. Sounds crazy, right?

You may not eat 178 chicken wings or 40 hot dogs at a time. But you may still eat too much sodium. Most people eat 3,400 mg of sodium per day or more. And that's enough to raise your risk for a heart attack, stroke, and other health problems.<sup>1</sup>

Want to learn how to eat less sodium to protect your heart and your health? Take the month-long Health Challenge to *Limit Sodium*.

How much do you know about the health benefits of reducing sodium/salt in your diet? Take this quiz to find out.



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1.   Too much sodium in your diet can increase blood pressure and the risk for heart disease and stroke.
2.   You can lower your blood pressure in just a few days, by reducing the amount of sodium in your diet.
3.   You need some sodium in your diet to help control blood pressure, absorb nutrients from food, and support nerve and muscle function.
4.   The average adult should consume less than 1,500 mg of sodium/salt per day.
5.   Canned soups, microwave meals, and breads do not contain high levels of sodium.

How did you do? The average adult should consume less than 1,500 mg of sodium per day. But most people eat twice that amount by eating things like fried foods, microwave meals, pizza, processed food, and processed meats. The good news: Eating more plant-based foods will help protect your heart and keep your blood pressure under control.

Answers: 1. True. 2. True. 3. False. 4. True. 5. False.

## Why eat less salt?

A couple slices of pizza. A fast food burger with fries. Canned soup, microwave meals, and processed meats. What's the big deal? These foods are all high in sodium.

Most adults should eat 1,500 mg of sodium per day or less, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.<sup>2</sup> But people consume 3,400 mg of sodium or more per day. And that's a problem.

