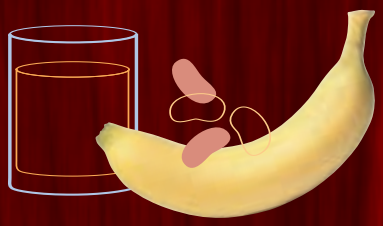
OLDER ADULT

Health Facts



Sodium and Potassium

Nearly all Americans eat too much salt (sodium). Most of the salt comes from eating processed foods (75%), or adding salt to food while cooking and using the salt shaker at meals (5% to 10%). On average, the more salt a person eats, the higher his or her blood pressure. Eating less salt is an important way to reduce the risk of high blood pressure, which may in turn reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, congestive heart failure, and kidney damage. To reduce the amount of sodium in your diet, eat less processed food and use less salt while cooking and at the table.

Other lifestyle changes may prevent or delay getting high blood pressure and may help lower elevated blood pressure. These include eating more potassium-rich foods, losing excess weight, being more physically active, and eating a healthy diet. If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Did you know that sodium and potassium both impact blood pressure? A diet rich in potassium helps to counterbalance some of sodium's harmful effects on blood pressure.

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

Older adults should aim for no more than 1,500 milligrams of sodium each day.
This is about 3/4 teaspoon of salt. You should also try to get 4,700 milligrams of potassium each day.

Here are some tips for eating less salt and more potassium:

- When you're choosing packaged foods, check the sodium content on the Nutrition Facts label. Focus on the milligrams of sodium in each serving. Use the percent Daily Value

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Potassium 700mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

(% DV) to help limit your sodium intake. Five percent DV or less is low and 20% DV or more is high. You don't want to exceed a total of 65% DV for sodium from all foods in a day. Sixty-five percent DV is 1,500 milligrams of sodium.

- Compare sodium content for similar foods. This can really make a difference. Use the Nutrition Facts label to select brands that are lower in sodium.
- Use the claims on the front of the food package to quickly identify foods that contain less salt or that are a good source of potassium. Examples include "low in sodium," "very low sodium," and "high in potassium."
- When you're preparing food at home, use herbs and spices to add flavor to your foods. Don't salt foods before or during cooking—and limit use at the table.
- While salt substitutes containing potassium chloride may be useful for some individuals, they can be harmful to people with certain medical conditions. Consult your healthcare provider before using salt substitutes.
- When you're eating out, ask that your meal be prepared without salt or ask your wait person to identify foods that are made without salt.

Ranges of sodium content for selected foods available in the retail market

This table is provided to show the importance of reading the food label to determine the sodium content of food, which can vary by several hundreds of milligrams in similar foods.

Food	Amount	Range of Sodium Content (mg)	% Daily Value (% DV)* for Sodium
Breads, all types	1 oz	95 - 210	4% - 9%
Frozen vegetables, all types	1/2 c	2 - 160	0% - 7%
Frozen main dishes	8 oz	500 - 2,570	21% - 107%
Salad dressing, regular fat, all types	2 Tbsp	110 - 505	5% - 21%
Whole-grain, ready-to-eat cereals	1 c	35 - 375	1% - 16%
Soup (tomato), reconstituted	8 oz	700 - 1,260	29% - 53%
Tomato juice	8 oz (~1 c)	340 - 1,040	14% - 43%
Potato chips[a]	1 oz (28.4 g)	120 - 180	5% - 8%
Pretzels[a]	1 oz (28.4 g)	290 - 560	12% - 23%

* % Daily Values (DV) listed in this column are based on the food amounts listed in the table. The DV used for sodium on the Nutrition Facts label is 2,400 mg. Since older adults should consume only 1,500 mg of sodium, you should aim for no more that 65% DV.

[a] All snack foods are regular flavor, salted.

Source: Agriculture Research Service (ARS) Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 17 and recent manufacturers' label data from retail market surveys. Serving sizes were standardized to be comparable among brands within a food. Bread slices vary in size and weight across brands.

Note: None of the examples provided were labeled low-sodium products.

Get enough potassium each day

Adults should consume 4,700 milligrams of potassium each day. Potassium-containing food sources include leafy greens, such as spinach and collards; fruit from vines, such as grapes and blackberries; root vegetables, such as carrots and potatoes; and citrus fruits, such as oranges and grapefruit. More specific examples are provided below.

Food, Amount	Potassium (mg)	% Daily Value*	Calories
Sweet potato, baked, 1 potato (146 g)	694	20%	131
Beet greens, cooked, 1/2 c	655	19%	19
Potato, baked, flesh, 1 potato (156 g)	610	17%	145
White beans, canned, 1/2 c	595	17%	153
Yogurt, plain, non-fat, 8-oz container	579	17%	127
Prune juice, 1/2 c	530	15%	136
Tuna, yellowfin, cooked, 3 oz	484	14%	118
Lima beans, cooked, 1/2 c	484	14%	104
Winter squash, cooked, 1/2 c	448	13%	40
Cod, Pacific, cooked, 3 oz	439	13%	89
Banana, 1 medium	422	12%	105
Spinach, cooked, 1/2 c	419	12%	21
Tomato juice, 3/4 c	417	12%	31
Orange juice, canned, 3/4 c	436	12%	105

* % Daily Values (DV) listed in this column are based on the food amounts listed in the table and FDA's Daily Value for potassium (3,500 mg).

Source: Nutrient values from Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 17. Foods are from ARS single nutrient reports, sorted in descending order by nutrient content in terms of common household measures. Food items and weights in the single nutrient reports are adapted from those in the 2002 revision of USDA Home and Garden Bulletin No. 72, Nutritive Value of Foods. Mixed dishes and multiple preparations of the same food item have been omitted from this table.

Notes