



EATING 101

RU DINING HEALTHY?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE RU HEALTHY DINING TEAM

A Joint Program Between Rutgers Dining Services and The New Jersey Institute for Food, Nutrition, and Health



What's Shaking With Sodium?



When you hear the word “sodium,” your first thought is usually the table salt that is generously shaken atop your food. Although table salt does contain 40% sodium, the greatest contributor of sodium in our diets comes from packaged and processed foods. Sodium can be hidden in all sorts of foods such as soups, lunchmeats, canned vegetables and sauces. Need to kick your salt habit? Follow these simple tips to decrease your sodium intake in the dining halls.

- **Taste before you shake:** Often, people habitually salt their food before tasting. Always taste your food first before you salt.
- **Hand it to your food:** Instead of adding salt directly from the shaker, sprinkle some into your hand and then pinch the desired amount onto your meal. Remember, just ¼ teaspoon of salt adds about 575mg of sodium. That’s over a quarter of your daily allotment!
- **Spice it up:** Longing for some extra flavor, but without the added sodium? Try adding a dash of pepper or lemon, or substitute salt with some fresh or dried herbs. Spices and herbs can be found near the pizza and pasta line in the dining halls.
- **Reprocessing processed foods:** If you love salty foods, you may just be accustomed to the level of salty flavor in processed foods. Before snacking on a salty bag of potato chips, check the Nutrition Facts Label for the sodium content. When in doubt, find that same crunch in fresh fruits or baby carrots for a low sodium snack.



Eating too much salt in the short term can leave you feeling bloated and swollen due to increased water retention. In the long term, too much salt can lead to high blood pressure and kidney disease. The American Heart Association recommends that healthy adults aim to consume no more than 2,300mg of sodium each day. Although is it healthy to keep your sodium intake on the lower side, some sodium *is* a necessary and important mineral in the diet.

.Don't be at fault, reduce the salt!

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References: *Shaking the Salt Habit*. Available at:

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