



Be Aware: Sodium is Everywhere!

ABOUT 9 IN 10 CHILDREN in the U.S. eat more sodium than recommended, with most sodium in the form of salt, as a part of processed foods. A high sodium diet can lead to high blood pressure which is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. About 1 in 6 children ages 8–17 years has elevated blood pressure. Lowering sodium in children’s diets today can help prevent heart disease tomorrow, especially for those who are overweight. The preference for salt is established through diet at a young age. Parents and caregivers can help lower sodium intake by influencing the way foods are produced, sold, prepared and served.

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Children in the U.S., ages 6–18 years eat an average of about 3,300 mg of sodium a day before any salt is added at the table. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that children eat less than 2,300 mg of sodium per day.

Eating too much sodium affects some people’s blood pressure more than others. Children in the following



groups should eat even less sodium, 1,500 mg per day:

- African Americans
- Those with:
 - Hypertension
 - Diabetes
 - Chronic kidney disease

WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

- **Every meal and snack.** Children typically consume 15% of daily sodium at breakfast, 30% at lunch, 39% at dinner and 16% at snacks.
- **Common foods.** About 43% of sodium consumed by children

(continued on page 2)

DID YOU KNOW...

- August 1–7 is World Breastfeeding Week. The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) is a global network dedicated to the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding worldwide.
- National Immunization Awareness Month is an annual observance in August to highlight the importance of vaccinations for people of all ages.
- One generation ago, almost half of children in the U.S. walked to school. Today, only 1 in 10 children walks to school regularly.
- About 90% of U.S. children, ages 6–18 years, eat too much sodium daily.
- 1 in 6 children has elevated blood pressure, which can be lowered in part by a healthy diet, including less sodium.
- More than 70% of the sodium Americans consume comes from processed and restaurant foods—not the salt shaker.

WABA, NHTSA, CDC

Quotable Quotes

“A healthy outside starts from the inside.”

– Robert Ulrich

Be Aware: Sodium is Everywhere!

— Continued from front page

comes from just 10 common food types:

- Pizza, bread and rolls
- Cold cuts, cured meats and cheese
- Sandwiches like cheeseburgers
- Snacks, such as chips
- Chicken patties, nuggets and tenders
- Pasta mixed dishes, such as spaghetti with sauce
- Mexican mixed dishes, such as burritos and tacos
- Soup

Processed foods and restaurant foods. Most sodium is already in food before you buy it or order it. About 65% comes from store foods, 13% from fast food and pizza restaurants, and 9% from school cafeteria foods.

Americans' use of packaged food has increased substantially in the past 50 years. Many of the ingredients that we now use when we cook "from scratch" at home are processed in some way.

- Many processed foods at the grocery store are easy to identify—in general, anything with a Nutrition Facts label on the package has been processed.
- Frozen meals, snack foods like chips and cookies and most beverages have been processed.
- Staples such as bread, flour, butter, chicken broth and canned or frozen vegetables have also been processed in some way.
- Products that use labels such as "all natural" or "whole grain" are still processed.

"Processed" can mean many different things and many processed foods are not bad for you. Products such as frozen vegetables are often low in sodium and good for your health. That's why it's important to check Nutrition Facts labels and always choose options lower in sodium.

HOW DO YOU FIND OUT HOW MUCH IS IN YOUR FOOD?

- Look for the Nutrition Facts label.
- First check serving sizes. Make sure your portions



match the serving size listed on the label so you're not eating more sodium than you expect.

- Sodium will be shown in milligrams and also as a percent of daily value. Both figures can help you determine products with less sodium.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Parents and caregivers can:

- Try different spices, herbs and vegetables instead of salt, when cooking at home.
- Use 'low sodium' or 'no salt added' ingredients in meals and recipes.
- Model healthy eating for children by having a diet rich in fruits and vegetables without added sodium.
- Compare Nutrition Facts labels to choose the lowest sodium options when shopping.
- Ask your grocery manager to provide more low sodium options of your family's favorite foods.
- Request restaurant nutrition information to make healthier, lower sodium choices.
- Use social media outlets to share your challenges and successes for reducing sodium in your child's diet.

— Adapted from: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*

KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

Time for School; Get There Safely

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN! Time to kick off another exciting and fun-filled school year. Even if your kids have already walked out the door for the first day of school, it is not too late to remind them how to get to and from school safely.

Safety must be the first lesson of every new school year. Tragically, from 2006 to 2015 there were 301 school-age children (18 and younger) killed in school transportation-related crashes. It is important to share a few simple tips with kids to help them stay safe when traveling to and from school.

RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS

School buses are the safest way for children to travel to and from school. However, there are dangers when children are boarding and leaving the bus. Over the last decade, nearly two-thirds of school-age pedestrians fatally injured in school transportation-related crashes were struck by school buses or other vehicles when getting on or off a school bus. Teach your child to always play it **SAFE**:

Stay five steps away from the curb.

Always wait for the bus driver to tell you when to board.

Face forward after finding a seat on the bus.

Exit the bus when it stops, look left-right-left, and walk directly away from the bus toward and up onto the curb or sidewalk.

WALKING

Walking to school is great exercise and helps kids get ready to face their studies. Children under 10 years of age should be accompanied by an adult or someone who will make sure they walk safely. Teach your child to always:

- Use the sidewalk whenever possible and if there isn't a sidewalk, walk on the edge of the street, facing traffic.
- Focus when walking near traffic – this is no time for horseplay.



- Use crosswalks whenever they are available to cross the street.
- Look left-right-left before crossing any street.

BIKING

Kids love riding their bikes and it can be a fun, quick way to get to school. Be sure to teach these simple things to keep their bike ride safe:

- Always wear a properly fitted helmet and securely fasten the chin strap.
- Ride in the same direction as traffic and follow traffic signs and signals.
- Stay in the bike lane whenever possible.
- Use the sidewalk appropriately and keep an eye out for pedestrians.
- Never use electronics while riding—they are distracting.

A SAFE JOURNEY TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Whether you are talking about school subjects and new teachers or about shopping for supplies, make safety a central part of back-to-school conversations with children every new school year.

— *Adapted from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (nhtsa.gov)*

Sautéed Green Beans & Cherry Tomatoes

Olive oil, divided	2 tsp	Cherry tomatoes, halved.....	1 1/2 cups
Green beans, trimmed	1 pound	Balsamic vinegar	1 Tbsp
Water	1/2 cup	Salt and pepper	to taste
Garlic, minced	2 cloves		

1. Heat 1 tsp of oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add green beans and cook, stirring often, until seared in spots, 2–3 minutes.
2. Add water, cover and reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, about 3 minutes for crisp tender.
3. Push the beans to the side and add the remaining oil and garlic and cook just 30 seconds, until fragrant.
4. Add tomatoes, stir everything together and cook until the tomatoes begin to break down, 2–3 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in vinegar and season with salt and pepper.

Yield: 8 servings

Meets requirement for vegetable

— *EatingWell.com*

Sweet Corn and Black Bean Tacos

Corn kernels, fresh preferably ..	2 cups	Olive oil	1 Tbsp
Cilantro	2 Tbsp	Cumin	1 tsp
Radishes, thinly sliced	3	Black beans, drained, rinsed	2 (15 ounce) cans
Lime, zested and juiced	1	Water	1/3 cup
Jalapeño pepper, seeded, minced (optional)	1	Salt and black pepper	to taste
Olive oil	2 Tbsp	Whole corn tortillas	10
Feta, crumbled	2/3 cup	Avocado, sliced	2
Onion, chopped	1	Tomatoes, fresh, diced	1 1/2 cups

1. Boil the corn 5 minutes, slice the kernels off the cobs. Transfer the kernels to a medium-sized mixing bowl and add the chopped cilantro, radishes, lime zest and juice, jalapeño (if desired), 2 Tbsp olive oil and salt. Mix well. Stir in crumbled feta. Set aside.
2. Sauté onions with a sprinkle of salt in 1 Tbsp olive oil, about 5–8 minutes. Add the cumin and cook for 30 seconds while stirring. Pour in the beans and water. Stir, cover and reduce heat to simmer for 5 minutes, then remove the lid and use the back of a fork to mash up at least half of the beans. Remove from heat, season with salt and pepper, to taste.
3. Heat a non-stick skillet and warm each tortilla individually, flipping occasionally. Fold a tea towel over the warmed tortillas to keep them warm.
4. Spread black beans down the middle of each tortilla. Top with corn mixture, a slice of avocado and fresh tomatoes.

Yield: 10 servings

Meets requirement for meat/meat alternate, vegetable and whole grain-rich

— *Cookieandkate.com*

ACTIVITY CORNER

Me in a Bag



A FUN WAY for children to learn about you, and learn about each other.

At the beginning of the year, introduce yourself using “Me in a Bag.” Put a few items that represent you in a large paper sack. “In my sack, I put a paintbrush because I’m an artist, my favorite book, pictures of my family, my pets and my favorite healthy food, a Frisbee and a sea shell. The children sit around me, and I explain the significance of each item as I pull it out of the bag. This discussion helps the kids get to know me as a person”. Each child then has a turn to bring in his/her own “Me in a Bag,” giving everyone in the class a chance to shine.

— *Adapted from:*
National Education Association

This Nutrition Edition is brought to you by:

and is produced by:



CocoKids™
Childhood Champions
Child Health & Nutrition Program

www.CoCoKids.org
nutrition@cocokids.org
(925) 676-6117 • (Fax) 676-5829

Program Director..... Paula James
Co-Editor..... Donna Green, RD
Supervisor, Co-Editor..... Catherine Stafford

Food Q. What do you use to fix a broken tomato?
Funny A. Tomato paste!