The hidden salt
in your favorite foods

From sauces to seasonings, salt can hide where you least expect it. Use this color guide to evaluate the foods you choose — and help keep your sodium intake at a healthy level.

Salt and your health

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), healthy adults should consume no more than **2,300 milligrams of sodium per day**. That's equal to 1 teaspoon of salt.

But 9 out of 10 Americans consume too much sodium.
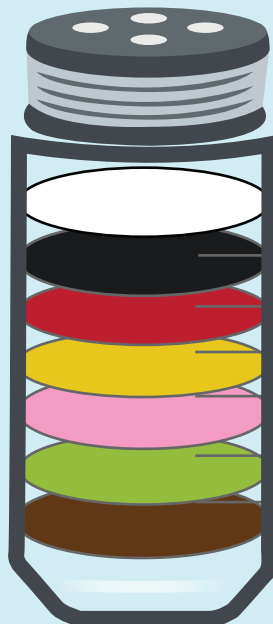
Too much sodium increases your risk for:

- Stroke
- Heart failure
- Osteoporosis
- Stomach cancer
- Kidney disease
- Enlarged heart muscle

Where salt gets sneaky

Food doesn't have to taste salty to be high in sodium. Below are some common culprits of sodium-heavy foods. To help remember them, think of them as colors:

White: Table salt, cottage cheese, ranch dressing, vegetable seasoning, cheeses

Black: Soy sauce, fish sauce, teriyaki sauce

Red: Ketchup, tomato juice or sauces

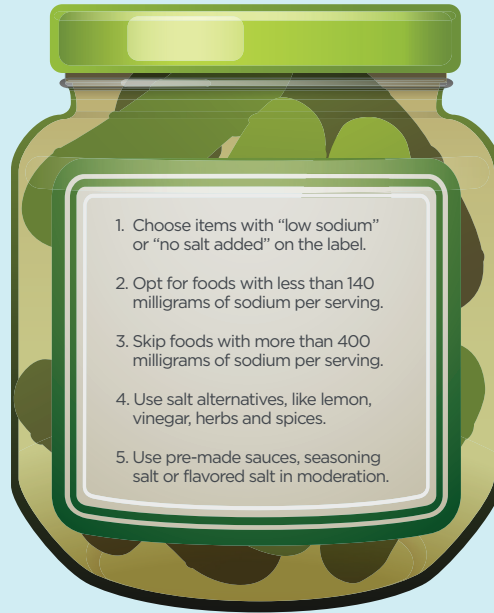**Yellow**: Mustard, seasonings, cheeses

Pink: Lunch or deli meat, ham, bacon, sausage

Green: Pickles, relish, olives

Brown: Soups, gravies, sauces

How to avoid sneaky salt

These everyday changes can have a
big impact on your overall health.

1. Choose items with "low sodium"
   or "no salt added" on the label.

2. Opt for foods with less than 140
   milligrams of sodium per serving.

3. Skip foods with more than 400
   milligrams of sodium per serving.

4. Use salt alternatives, like lemon,
   vinegar, herbs and spices.

5. Use pre-made sauces, seasoning
   salt or flavored salt in moderation.

From the expert

"Approximately 75% of our dietary sodium
consumption is from packaged foods and
restaurants, not from salt added during
cooking or at the table. To keep your sodium
intake low, check labels and look out for
high-sodium foods."

— Lindsay Yau, registered dietitian nutritionist at
   Sharp Rees-Stealy Medical Centers