

extra

healthy living

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4 ways to reduce sodium for healthier eating

It's not enough to put the salt-shaker away.

"You can never use salt from the shaker and still take in too much," said Jessica Levinson, registered dietitian and the founder of nutritioulucious.com, a Web-based nutrition counseling practice in New York City.

She said about three-quarters of the average person's sodium intake comes from processed and prepackaged food.

"The most important thing to know is just because food doesn't taste salty doesn't mean it's not high in sodium, so always check the nutrition panel," Levinson said.

Although it's tough to keep track of sodium intake, she said online food diaries, such as www.mycaloriecounter.com and www.calorieking.com, can help.

People with high blood pressure, the elderly and African-Americans should consume no more than 1,500 milligrams per day, according to the federal government. Everyone else

should set a limit of 2,300 mg per day.

Here are some of her suggestions to limit intake:

1 | LIMIT SALTY SNACKS: Many snacks, such as crackers, have sodium baked in and sprinkled on top. Opt for a chip with 100 to 180 milligrams of sodium per serving. Levinson, a Frito-Lay spokeswoman, said its snack chips, for example, are moderate in sodium because salt is sprinkled on top, rather than baked in.

2 | CHECK SODIUM IN DAIRY PRODUCTS: Dairy products are a great choice for breakfast, but some are surprisingly high in sodium. Instead of cottage cheese, which has more than 400 mg of



sodium, try Greek yogurt with less than 100 mg.

3 | PICK DELI MEATS, FROZEN DINNERS WISELY: Rather than a smoked ham (900 mg in 3 ounces) and cheese sandwich with mayo, opt for roasted fresh sliced turkey breast (44 mg in 3 ounces) on whole-wheat bread. Try to buy frozen meals with no more than 400 to 450 mg per serving.

4 | REDUCE SODIUM IN SOUPS, CANNED VEGETABLES: Instead of eating an entire can of soup, replace half the broth with water. Rinse canned vegetables with water.

— Barb Berggoetz