

# Eat and Drink to Lower Blood Pressure

## TAKING EVEN ONE OF THESE STEPS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

 <b>If You...</b>	 <b>Try This Instead...</b>
 Are overweight	 <b>Eat less/smaller portions.</b> Losing weight can lower your blood pressure. <i>Tip:</i> In general, keep portions about the size of your fist. Check serving sizes (packages often have several servings).
 Eat foods high in salt (sodium)	 <b>Choose reduced-sodium or no-salt-added foods.</b> Always check packaged foods for sodium content and choose foods with less than 5% sodium per serving. Don't add salt to foods!
 Always put salt on your food before eating	 <b>Get the salt shaker off the table!</b> Use a salt substitute. Or try other spices instead of salt.
 Drink soda and other drinks	 <b>Drink water, club soda, or low-fat milk.</b> Even diet soda may have a lot of salt. Always check the label.
 Eat too few fruits and vegetables	 <b>Eat fresh fruits and vegetables at every meal.</b> If only frozen or canned fruits and vegetables are available, choose ones without added salt.
 Often eat unhealthy snacks (chips, candy, and cookies)	 <b>Snack on healthier foods.</b> Eat less junk food and sweets. Try fruit, vegetable sticks, unbuttered and unsalted popcorn, or nuts.
 Add salt when cooking (rice, pasta, cereals)	 <b>Use other spices instead of salt, such as onion or garlic powder.</b> Don't add salt to food or boiling water. Cut back on "instant" products (they usually have added salt).
 Often eat red meat	 <b>Eat fresh chicken, turkey, fish, or leaner meats.</b> Avoid canned, smoked, and processed meats (they have a lot of salt).
 Eat a lot of high-fat dairy products (whole milk, ice cream)	 <b>Switch to low-fat or non-fat milk, yogurt, cheese, and frozen yogurt.</b>
 Eat fast food	 <b>Eat less fast food – no more than once a week.</b> Avoid large and "super-size" portions. Fast food is high in calories and salt. Cooking at home allows you to control the amount of salt in your food.
 Eat a lot of "convenience" foods (frozen dinners, packaged mixes, canned soups/broths)	 <b>Cook at home whenever you can, without adding salt.</b> Eat fewer convenience foods and only those that are low in sodium.