



Family Nutrition In Action

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MAY IS NATIONAL HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE EDUCATION MONTH

A healthy lifestyle helps to prevent high blood pressure. These are some healthy lifestyle habits that can help you prevent and control high blood pressure:

- maintaining a healthy weight
- being physically active
- following a healthy eating plan
- choosing and preparing foods with less salt and sodium
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation and limit alcohol intake. Some people should not have alcohol at all, including pregnant or lactating, underage, or people who have problems

Choosing And Preparing Foods Lower In Salt And Sodium

Most of us take in more salt and sodium than we need. The current

recommendation is that the amount that we take in should be less than 2,400 milligrams a day. This means that the total amount of sodium in our daily food should be less than the equivalent of one teaspoon of table salt. For those who have high blood pressure, the doctor may advise you to eat even less salt and sodium.

So what can you do to reduce the salt and sodium in your diet? You can follow these tips for shopping, preparing and serving healthy meals and snacks:

- Learn to read the food label. Look at the serving size. Consider the milligrams of sodium and the percent daily value. Think about the amount that you will usually use. Is it more or less than the serving size given on the package? Can this food fit into your healthy eating plan?

When you shop for food, choose the types and amounts of foods that will help you manage the amount of sodium in your healthy eating plan.

- Buy fresh vegetables or when you buy frozen or canned vegetables,

- choose the plain ones and choose those that have no added salt.
- Choose fresh poultry, fish, and lean meat, instead of canned or processed types.
 - Choose herbs, spices, and salt-free seasoning blends in cooking and at the table.
 - Buy less instant or flavored rice, pasta, and cereal mixes. These usually have more sodium and salt. When you cut back on these you could also have another bonus. That is you will probably save money on your grocery bill, because these products often cost more than the plain versions.
 - Choose less frozen dinners, pizzas, packaged mixes, canned soups or broths, and salad dressings. These foods often have a lot of sodium.
 - When you do choose convenience foods, choose those that are lower in sodium.
 - When available, buy low- or reduced-sodium, or no salt added versions of foods.
 - Choose ready-to-eat breakfast cereals that are lower in sodium.

When you prepare and serve foods, try these steps for meals with less salt and sodium:

- Use less salt at the table and in cooking.

- Cook rice, pasta, and hot cereals without adding salt.
- Cook with low-salt ingredients; Use more spices and herbs.
- Try salt-free blends of spices and herbs in cooking and at the table.
- Rinse salt from canned foods. For example, you can rinse canned tuna to remove some sodium.
- Use fewer sauces, mixes, and instant products.
- Limit smoked, cured, or processed beef, pork, or poultry.

Chicken and Spanish Rice

(5 servings)

Ingredients

- 1 cup onions, chopped
- ¼ cup green peppers
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 8-oz can tomato sauce
- 1 tsp parsley, chopped
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1-¼ tsp garlic, minced
- 5 cups cooked rice (in unsalted water)
- 3-½ cups chicken breast, cooked (skin and bone removed), diced.



Preparation

- In a large skillet, sauté onions and green peppers in oil for 5 minutes on medium heat.
- Add tomato sauce and spices. Heat through.
- Add cooked rice and chicken, and heat through.