

These are three things that pack on the pounds.

Avoid Them!

If you can eliminate any one, or better still, all three of the following foods or food traps, you will most likely realize tremendous weight loss.

Food #1 - Excess Salt

Avoidance of salt is not as simple as it may sound. Almost all packaged foods, canned or pre-mixed soups, frozen foods/dinners, and prepared foods contain high levels of salt. Dietary salt is a major factor in the onset of high blood pressure. According to the CDC (the Center for Disease Control), in 2002 nearly one-third of Americans either had high blood pressure or were taking drugs to control the disease. For those 60 and over, two out of three have high blood pressure in the form of either raised systolic pressure, diastolic pressure, or both. We are fatter now than in 2002, so the numbers are higher.

Sodium (table salt is sodium chloride) is a very important mineral for proper bodily function. There isn't much chance of running short of this substance.

In ancient times salt was actually used for money or trade. It is where we got the term, “not worth his salt.”

In America it is almost impossible to have a problem with sodium deficiency due to diet. Even in the health food stores, it's hard to find totally unsalted food. Americans have gotten used to and crave the taste of the salt to the extent that unsalted foods just don't move well from the shelves. The total absence of this substance has become repulsive to our taste buds. For marketing and commercial purposes, taste takes precedence over health. As adults, we crave and demand salt; and food manufacturers honor that demand.

Most of the food that we eat reflects an acquired taste. You will find that when you stop eating salted foods, within a few weeks your taste buds will change. You will no longer need the taste of salt. Once you reduce the salt concentration in your body, you will lose weight due to less water retention.

What do you think happens when the salt concentration in your body skyrockets? You must retain more water to try to keep the salt dissolved and at the right concentration. Salt requires 70 times its weight in water to keep it dissolved in the body. Each time you sprinkle salt on your food or eat highly salted foods, remember that 70 times its weight in water will be retained by your body. For each ounce of salt, that's over **FOUR POUNDS** of water retained by the body to keep the salt dissolved. That is why drinking the proper amount of water can help lower blood pressure.

Because salt thickens many types of shampoo surfactants, in the lab I often added salt to shampoo

formulations. By adding salt, a thin shampoo became a thick one. By adding salt to a free-flowing blood system, the blood becomes thicker and blood pressure rises proportionately. Now as you sit down to dinner, are you thickening your blood to a dangerous level? Are you reaching for the salt shaker? Are you shoving your meal back on the table to your wife because “it has not been seasoned”? Maybe it does not taste like your mother’s. Would you rather die with a satisfied stomach or live in enlightenment?

Reducing the use of salt will no doubt lead you to a healthier lifestyle. It may also force you to cook more because most restaurants use an awful lot of salt. Even baked potatoes are often delivered to the table with salt all over the skin. I’ve asked for a baked potato without salt on the skin, only to be told that they “come pre-salted.” I usually eat the skin of the potato because most of the fiber is found there. However, I cannot eat skins that are crusted with salt. By then the skin is more harmful than beneficial.

If you never add salt to foods, you would not be short of sodium. It is a natural ingredient in most foods.

So how do you judge how much salt is too much?

The Food and Nutrition Board recommends a **MAXIMUM** salt intake of 2,400mg per day. Some sources maintain that the minimum sodium requirement for an adult is 500mg per day, while others say you only need 115mg per day.

These are the Food and Nutrition Board's recommendations for various ages for daily sodium intake, which are at the maximum end of the scale:

Age (mg)	Recommended Sodium Requirements
0 - 5 months	120
6 - 11 months	200
1	225
2 - 5	300
6 - 9	400
10 - 18	500
18+	500

115 to 500mg is all that we need, but this is what we get in typical foods:

<u>Food</u>	<u>Sodium (mg)</u>
Table Salt, 1 tsp	2358
Pickles, dill, 1 large	1731
Canned chicken soup, 1 cup	850
Sauerkraut, 1/2 cup	780
Pretzels, 1 oz	486
Cottage cheese, 1/2 cup	459
Sardines, 3 oz	429
Deli ham, 1 oz	341
Deli turkey breast, 1 oz	335
Soy Sauce, 1 tsp	304
Cheese, American, 1 oz	304
Cornflakes, 1 cup	298
Deli bologna	295
Olives, black, 5 large	192
Potato Chips, 1 oz	183

ONE TEASPOON of salt hits the MAXIMUM amount of salt that you should put in your body each day. ONE TEASPOON!!!

Let me give you a quick way to determine the suitable sodium content in foods. As an average, we need roughly 2,000 to 2,500 calories per day. That can vary based on several factors, but it's a good average.

The MAXIMUM amount of sodium that we should ingest is 2,400mg per day. Others suggest a maximum of half of that or less, so 2,400mg is the LIBERAL upper limit. That's approximately 1mg of sodium for each calorie. This keeps the math simple, and it is a fairly good guide.

If the food has 600 calories, it should have a maximum of 600mg of sodium. Remember, this method of calculating figures on the MAXIMUM amount of sodium you should have daily, not the ideal amount, which is closer to 115 to 500mg. The IDEAL amount of sodium would be one-fourth mg or less per calorie.

I took a stroll down the grocery shelf and just randomly pulled foods off the shelf and looked at the calorie and sodium content per serving. Also remember that we usually eat more than one serving.

Food	Serving Size	Calories	mg Sodium
Uncle Ben's® Long Grain	about 1 cup cooked		
Wild Rice Vegetable and Herb	2 oz	180	790
Kraft® Catalina® Salad Dressing	2 tbsp	100	420
Hickory Smoked BBQ Sauce	2 tbsp	40	420
Ritz® Crackers	5 crackers	80	135
Nabisco® Triscuit® Reduced Fat	7 crackers 29g	120	160
Chips Ahoy®	3 cookies	160	110

Gerber® Baby Food	1 jar		
Turkey Rice		60	30
Vegetable Beef		70	35
Lamb		70	30
Beef		70	30
Chicken Noodle		80	40
Green Beans		35	10
Squash		40	10
Quaker® Instant Grits 1 packet 28g		100	310
Nature Valley® Roasted Almond Granola Bars		190	180
Total® Whole Grain Cereal 3/4 cup		100	190
Lipton® Cup A Soup			
Cream of Chicken 6oz prepared		60	620
Broccoli and Cheese		70	540
Starkist® Albacore Tuna Fillets 1pack 5oz		170	580
Delmont® canned vegetables			
Sweet Corn Cream Style 1/2 cup		60	360
Cut Breen Beans no salt added		20	10
Fresh Cut French Style Green Beans		20	390
no salt version		20	10

Notice the food when no salt is added. It dropped from 360mg and 390mg to 10mg. That's the difference in the way God made it and the way man modified it.

This is by no means a complete or even a representative list of the foods in the grocery store. It's just an indication of the relationship between sodium and calories and the limits that you should allow into your body.

Even if you think that you aren't salt sensitive and it won't affect your blood pressure, you are most likely wrong since most persons will develop high blood pressure as they age. Often people develop salt sensitivity and high blood pressure as they get older.

The other factor is the definition of high blood pressure. Traditionally, high blood pressure was a systolic greater than 140 or a diastolic greater than 90.

Now the research is saying that ANY increase over 120/80 heightens the risk of heart attack and stroke. With that new definition of high blood pressure, the percentage of people afflicted with high blood pressure skyrockets even more.

Just because you don't think you are salt sensitive now doesn't mean that it is not negatively affecting you. I've seen it with cosmetic ingredients. A person can use a product for years and then seemingly all of a sudden she develops an allergic reaction to it. If you overload your body for years with salt, it is a good chance that one day it will say to you, "That's it!" As you get older, chances increase for high blood pressure and its resulting diseases due to excess salt.

Another reason is that salt is a preservative. If you heavily salt meat, it won't spoil. Why do you think that's so? What do you already know about preservatives?

If a high concentration of salt kills germs and won't let them live, what about your living tissue? Why do you think some companies have "No preservatives added" on the label? Although they are often necessary in packaged foods, especially foods that contain water, people recognize that preservatives aren't good for them,. High salt concentrations act as a preservative that is harmful to both microbial and human life.

Would you feel comfortable eating large amounts of a substance that was used as a preservative?

When you hear the phrase “not worth his weight in salt,” perhaps the salt isn't worth as much as you think.

Stay away from it and foods high in salt.

Excerpted from the book, FAT2Fine – The SPIRIT of Weight Loss at www.HitBooks.com