



Nutrition Nibbles

Sacrifice Salt Without Losing Flavor

by Katie Giebler

If you are preparing home-cooked meals with wholesome, nutritious foods, congratulations! You've taken the first step to lower your salt intake. Your salt intake influences your risk of heart disease, stroke, and hypertension. Nearly one in three Americans are suffering from hypertension and 28% of us are borderline hypertensives. Stage 1 hypertension is a systolic pressure ranging from 140 to 159 mm Hg or a diastolic pressure ranging from 90 to 99 mm Hg, while Stage 2 hypertension is a systolic pressure of 160 mm Hg or higher or a diastolic pressure of 100 mm Hg or higher. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most of us should aim for about 1500 milligrams of sodium (2/3 teaspoon) per day, especially people with hypertension, those over 40 years old, and African Americans. Although it is much more convenient to order take-out or rely on processed, microwaveable meals, these types of meals comprise about 77% of the 3600 milligrams of sodium consumed each day by the average American. A daily allowance of 2300 mg of sodium per day for the general population was set in the 2005

Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Because the average age of our population is growing older, the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommended that the goal of 1500 mg of sodium per day apply to everyone, instead of only hypertensives, those over 40 years old, and African Americans. Cooking puts you in control of the amount of salt in your food and enables you to stay within this goal. With these tips to reduce salt but not skimp on flavor, your taste buds won't know the difference.

Tip #1: Use acids and fresh herbs to enhance flavor

Acids like vinegar, red wine, and citrus juices brighten flavor while fresh herbs like basil, oregano, and thyme add the finishing touches to round out the meal. These elements help other flavors pop and heighten the taste of the other ingredients. Fresh herbs add freshness, aroma, and depth to the dish.

Tip #2: Treat your taste buds to spice blends and specialty salts

Toasted spice blends or specialty salts like smoked sea salt added during cooking add nuances of flavor and bring diversity to dishes. Since these seasonings

College Corner: Resolution Re-Do, Part 2

You don't need a special day to "start over" and improve your life. You just need a smart approach! It's now February; what happened to your New Year's resolutions? Use Part 2 of this special New Year's Guide to resurrect and re-energize your resolutions.

Do any of these common resolutions sound familiar?

-Eat less- -Move more- -Stress less-
Stay healthy- -Drink less- -Lose weight-

If the new behavior, strategy, or goal you have chosen is personally salient, the benefits outweigh the challenges, and you are confident you can change, you are ready to restart. Now, it is time to SMARTen up! Whenever you decide to tackle something new, make sure your goal is S-M-A-R-T or Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely.

S is for Specific: Get nit-picky about your new goal. Compare these two statements: "I am going to eat healthier" vs. "I am going to eat an additional piece of fruit 5 days each week." The more specific, like the second statement, the more likely you are to meet or even exceed that goal. Keep it vague and you will not be able to measure your progress. To create a specific goal, consider the 5 W's: who, what, when, where, and why.

M is for Measurable: Quantify your new behavior so you can easily measure your progress. If your goal is to walk 30 minutes three times each week, you know you have met your goal if you indeed walk

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Sacrifice Salt continued...

are more intense, only a pinch is needed to make an impact on the flavor of the dish.

Tip #3: Look at nutrition labels and be choosy about what you put in your pantry

Salt hides everywhere in seemingly unsalty foods like cereal, pasta sauce, breads, and salad dressing. Take the time to compare labels while at the grocery store. Choose the lower-sodium versions of these foods so you can stretch your daily salt allowance further for the day.

Tip #4: Practice moderation

Even dietitians agree that salt-free foods lack taste, so indulging in high-sodium foods must be done sparingly and in small portions. Sprinkling a little full-fat cheese on pizza or just a few potato chips with a sandwich are enough to satisfy your salt craving.

Everyone needs sodium because it helps maintain healthy fluid balance in the body and is

an essential electrolyte for conducting nerve impulses. It is especially important to replenish during intense exercise when salt is lost from perspiration. Maintaining a healthy balance of sodium in the body is essential to internal health and functioning. Being conscious of your salt intake at a young age will serve as a preventative measure for avoiding bad habits and diseases in the future. For more information on how to reduce sodium in your diet and to sample some low sodium recipes, check out these websites:

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/food-and-nutrition/AN00350>

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/prevent/sodium/sodium.htm>

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/low-sodium-recipes/RE00101>

College Corner continued...

at least 30 minutes on three or more different days during the week. If your goal is simply to walk more, it can become difficult to measure... walk more than what? To set measurable goals, ask yourself: "How much?" "How long?" "How often?"

A is for Attainable: You want to make sure your new behavior is a little bit of a challenge but not impossible to achieve. Running a marathon next month may be an impossible goal to accomplish if you do not currently do any form of exercise. Always consider how confident you are in achieving your goal before you set it in stone. If confidence is high and your goal is something you can reasonably accomplish, you are more likely to succeed.

R is for Realistic: You must believe you can achieve your goal in order for it to be considered realistic. If you create an achievable goal but do not have the desire to go for it, then your goal is not realistic. To determine how reasonable your goal is, consider if you have done anything similar to this in the past. Did it work then? What conditions must be in place in order for this new behavior to happen?

T is for Timely: Choose a time frame during which to accomplish your goal. Examples include: Over the next week, I want to go to the gym four times for 30 minutes, or I want to lose ten pounds by May 1st. Open-ended goals without an end-by or accomplish-by date often fizzle out before they are completed.

Now that you have taken the time to examine your New Year's Resolution and design a SMART goal, you are ready to get started!

Meet Guest Author, Katie Giebler

Katie Giebler graduated from Santa Clara University in 2008 with a B.S. in Biology and minor in Chemistry. She also graduated from California State University, Sacramento in December 2010 with a B.S. in Dietetics. She decided to pursue a career in nutrition to educate people about the preventative powers that wholesome, nutritious foods have against chronic diseases like cancer and diabetes. Her goal is to become a Registered Dietitian

and Certified Specialist in Oncology. In her spare time, Katie likes to play piano, swim, draw, paint, cook, and spend time with her family. Her favorite foods are hummus, avocados, and dark chocolate. Random fact: Katie has donated two feet of her hair to "Locks of Love" and is working on her third! Katie will be providing *Nutrition Nibbles* with several articles on the latest nutrition topics.

Surprising Sources of Sodium

Love This Resource!

This food...	...has the amount of sodium as this one!	Sodium Content
1 cup cottage cheese	2 1/4 cups salted peanuts	1000 mg
1/2 cup pasta sauce	1 cup bite size pretzels	680 mg
Subway Footlong Sweet Chicken Teriyaki sandwich	6 hot dogs	2290 mg
8 oz tomato juice	4 slices of bacon	480 mg
3/4 cup Cheerios	3/4 cup Baked Lay's Potato Chips	200 mg

In honor of heart health month, check out this cool resource on keeping your ticker tip-top:

Life's Simple 7
by the American
Heart Association

Update: Newest Dietary Guidelines are Heavily Weighted

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010* were released on January 31st. Poor dietary choices and lack of physical activity are cited as two of the main causes of our country's obesity crisis (1/3 of children and 2/3 of adults are considered overweight or obese in this country). As a result, the latest guidelines incorporate recommendations to maintain calorie balance, manage a healthy waistline, and focus on consuming nutrient-dense foods and beverages. The 23 general key recommendations and 6 population-specific recommendations are nothing new to dietitians and health care professionals but serve as a reminder of our mission to help Americans improve their overall health and wellbeing. Furthermore, the new guidelines figure in to the creation of national nutrition education programs and Federal nutrition assistance programs, like school meal programs for youngsters and *Meals on Wheels* for seniors.

The Dietary Guidelines are aimed at **all** people ages 2 and older. Key public messages are divided into 3 main categories:

- **Balancing Calories**
 - Enjoy your food, but eat less.
 - Avoid oversized portions.
- **Foods to Increase**
 - Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
 - Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
- **Foods to Reduce**
 - Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread,

and frozen meals—and choose the foods with lower numbers.

- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

Three of the key recommendations came as a surprise to me, not because they aren't valid but rather because these topics seem to be fairly specific in comparison to many of the report's other suggestions:

- **Sodium:** The latest guidelines recommend that all Americans limit their sodium consumption to less than 2300mg and further reduce their intake to 1500mg if they are African American, have high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease, or are 51 years or older. This 1500mg recommendation applies to 50% of the U.S. population, including children and most adults!
- **Specific Nutrients:** Potassium, fiber, calcium, and vitamin D rich foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and dairy are specifically encouraged for their health benefits.
- **Foodborne Illness:** We are reminded to follow food safe practices when preparing and eating foods to reduce our risk of foodborne illness. This is smart advice that hasn't been in the public spotlight for awhile.

For more information on the newest Dietary Guidelines, check out: <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/PolicyDoc/ExecSumm.pdf>