



HARDEEP M. SINGH, M.D., F.A.C.P., A.G.A.F.

Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine
and the Subspecialty Board of Gastroenterology

**Gastroenterology,
Hepatology, Pancreaticobiliary Disease**

1010 West La Veta Avenue, Suite 570,
Orange, CA 92868

16300 Sand Canyon, Suite 301,
Irvine, CA 92618

Phone 714.835.7700 | Fax 714.835.8145

DrSingh@SouthernCalGI.com | SouthernCalGI.com

Dietary Recommendations for Reduced Sodium

Under certain conditions, excess sodium can cause the body to retain too much fluid. This can be harmful for people with conditions such as high blood pressure, heart disease or cirrhosis. Restricting the total amount of sodium in the diet to 4 grams/day may be adequate. However, some patients may need to restrict their intake to 2 grams/day.

Table Salt is used in the kitchen during food preparation, and added at the table. It is also added to many commercially canned and frozen foods. It must be restricted in these diets because table salt is about one-half sodium.

Sodium occurs naturally in many foods, but some foods contain more sodium than others. As a helpful guide: for the 4 grams/day diet, purchase products with no more than 300mg of sodium per serving. And for the 2 grams/day diet, purchase products with no more than 200mg of sodium per serving.

Sodium compounds, in addition to table salt, are often added to commercially processed foods. Some of those more commonly used are baking soda, brine, monosodium glutamate (MSG), baking powder, disodium phosphate or sodium benzoate. Please read food labels before purchasing or using.

Common medications such as antacids, laxatives and cough remedies often contain sodium compounds. Check with a physician or pharmacist if there is any question.

Avoid fast food restaurants because they tend to serve food that is very high in sodium. When dining in sit-down restaurants, ask that no salt be used in the preparation of your meal.

Never use a salt substitute unless your physician has approved it. These may replace the sodium with another mineral that could also be harmful to certain patients. Herbs and spices may be used in place of salt to add flavor and variety to meals.

Water softeners exchange the calcium in hard water with sodium from a salt brine. Avoid drinking home or commercially softened water. Do not use softened water to prepare foods or beverages. When purchasing bottled water, check the label to be sure it contains so sodium.

Follow the guides below to determine the differences between a 4-gram diet and a 2-gram diet.

4 grams salt per day diet

- Use a total of ½ teaspoon of table salt per day in cooking and food preparation. Do not add salt at the table.
- Limit prepared salad dressings and condiments, such as mustard or catsup, to a total of 3 tablespoons per day.
- Do not eat Bleu, Roquefort, Stilton or Gorgonzola cheeses. Limit other natural or aged cheeses to 2 ounces per day.
- Limit buttermilk to 8 ounces per week.
- Limit regular peanut butter to 3 teaspoons per week.

2 grams salt per day diet

- Use no table salt in cooking and food preparation. Do not add salt at the table.
- Do not use commercially prepared salad dressings or condiments, such as mustard and catsup.
- Do not eat any natural or aged cheeses.
- Do not drink buttermilk.
- Do not eat regular peanut butter.

These dietary recommendations are specifically meant for the condition which it treats.