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# HEALTHY CHOICES FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

## Topic: Sodium

► Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals, and choose the foods with lower numbers. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines suggest reducing daily sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams. It is suggested to further reduce intake to 1,500 mg among persons who are 51 and older and those of any age who are African American or have hypertension, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease. This applies to about half of the U.S. population. So remember to shake out the sodium in your diet!



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## Parent's Pow-Wow

► Habits are learned at a young age. Teach your children how to eat properly. Teach them to not salt their plates. Teach them to look at the nutrition labels on foods and to choose the food with the lowest sodium content. Many health conditions could be reduced if we always check for the amount of sodium we are eating. A good start would be to not even have the salt shaker on the dinner table.

## Basic Budget Bites

- Plan for leftovers, but use leftovers carefully.
- Stretch food dollars by adding a few more potatoes, rice, or pasta to dishes like casseroles.
- Buy produce in season — you will usually get a better price.
- Make use of the farmer's market if you have one in your area.



## Food Facts: Steps to reduce sodium

► Follow the tips below to decrease sodium in your diet:

- Remove the salt shaker from the table.
- Watch for disguised sodium in ingredients and products such as monosodium glutamate (MSG) and sodium bicarbonate (baking soda).
- Read food labels. They tell you the amount of sodium per serving.
- Replace processed foods with fresh foods. The more processed the food is, the more sodium it may contain.
- Season foods with herbs and spices rather than salt.
- Use vegetable oil instead of butter or margarine in cooking.

When you first start preparing foods without salt, they may taste bland to you. Instead of cutting out all the salt, try using less and less. The taste of salt is learned – you discover you like it, so you use more and more. If it can be learned, it can also be unlearned!



## Cooking with Kids: Honeydew Summer Salad Wedges

- 1 honeydew melon
- 1 package (3 ounces) gelatin, lemon flavored
- ½ cup boiling water
- ½ cup iced water
- Ice cubes
- 1 cup hulled whole strawberries



1. Cut melon in half, scoop out seeds.
2. Pat the inside of the melon dry using paper towels.
3. Dissolve gelatin in boiling water.
4. Combine ice water and ice cubes to make 1 cup.
5. Add to gelatin and stir until slightly thickened.

6. Place each melon half in a small bowl to hold it straight and firm.
7. Place half of strawberries in each melon half.
8. Pour gelatin mixture over berries.
9. Cover with plastic wrap, and chill until firm, about 3 hours.
10. To serve, cut into wedges.

**Nutrition Facts per serving:** 110 calories, 0 g total fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 105 mg sodium, 27 g carbohydrate, 2 g dietary fiber, 25 g sugars, 2 g protein.

**Yield:** 8 servings

Source: USDA Recipe Finder

## Recipe: Herb Potato Salad

- 1 pound potatoes
- ½ cup sliced radishes (optional)
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ¼ teaspoon dried thyme
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder

### Dressing:

- 3 tablespoons yogurt, plain nonfat
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise, reduced calorie
- 1 ½ teaspoons prepared mustard
- ½ teaspoon chopped garlic
- ¼ teaspoon salt

1. Scrub potatoes and cut into cubes.
2. Place in medium saucepan and cover with water. Bring to boil.
3. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 12 minutes or until potatoes are done. Drain.

4. Mix dressing ingredients.
5. Combine hot potatoes, dressing, radishes, basil, thyme, and onion powder. Serve hot or cold.

**Note:** The mustard and seasoning make this a tasty potato salad. Try using new red potatoes for added color.

**Nutrition Facts per serving:** 50 calories; 1.5 g total fat; 0 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 210 mg sodium; 8 g total carbohydrate; 3 g dietary fiber; 3 g sugars; 3 g protein.

**Yield:** 4 servings

Source: USDA Recipe Finder

## Local Events

### Smart tips: Enjoy more fruits and veggies

- 1 Include vegetables and fruits at every meal and snack.
- 2 Let your child select a new fruit at the grocery store.
- 3 Try a recipe for vegetable stir-fry.
- 4 Take a family trip to the farmer's market.

*Adapted from Eat Smart, Move More NC*



**If you are interested in nutrition classes, contact your extension office.**

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