

[IMAGE]

## Less Salt, Better Heart

By Editorial Staff

Too much salt is bad for the heart; that's why the American Heart Association recommends adults consume no more than 2,300 mg of sodium per day (with an ideal limit of no more than 1,500 mg). What makes it dangerous? Too much sodium elevates blood pressure, increasing cardiovascular disease risk. More salt, worse heart.

The problem is that these days, most American adults (and children) consume far too much sodium in their daily diet, courtesy of an ever-increasing shift away from unprocessed foods toward processed ones; not to mention a fast-food, pre-prepared-food lifestyle. That means the decisions you make at home regarding salt all that more important when it comes to cultivating heart health.

According to new research, people who add salt to foods (not including via the cooking process) less have a lower risk of heart disease and heart failure compared to people who add more. By "adding salt," we're talking about table salt – shaking it on foods, which for some people is an every-meal occurrence. Findings appear in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*.

The takeaways: 1) Think about skipping the table salt more often, whether you're eating at home or at a restaurant. 2) When preparing food, use the minimum amount of salt possible to make the meal still taste flavorful (various herbs and spices can add flavor without the sodium). 3) Eat fewer pre-prepared, processed foods, which tend to be high in sodium. 4) The next time you eat out, check out the nutritional content, specifically sodium. Once you leave home, you lose the ability to control how much salt you add to your food, which is why many meals come close to or exceed the AHA daily sodium recommendation.

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