Controlling your risk: Limit salt and sodium

There are two quick things you can do that may help to control your blood pressure and avoid fluid retention.

- Put away your salt shaker (sodium chloride)
- Read food labels to choose foods lower in sodium.

How much sodium is too much?

The American Heart Association recommends 2000 mg or less of sodium in a day.

A low sodium food is less than 300 mg in a serving.

Limit sodium by …

Not salting your food when cooking or eating it.

Eating "fast foods" less often.

Eating fewer ready-to-eat foods like…

- pancakes and waffles
- frozen dinners
- canned foods
- bottled sauces

Pickles, relish, and catsup have sodium too. Read the label and choose ones with less sodium.

Try using these instead of salt to flavor your food**...**

- herbs
- spices
- onion
- garlic
- lemon juice

Read the food label. It lists how much sodium is in a serving. Foods with more than 300 mg of sodium in a serving should not be eaten everyday.

Keep these tips in mind as you cook…

Use less salt than the recipe calls for or leave it out.

Rinse and drain canned vegetables in cold water before cooking.

Use a salt substitute only with your doctor's okay.

Salt substitutes are made with potassium instead of sodium. Depending on your health and what medications you are taking, the extra potassium found in salt substitutes may be harmful to you.