

## **Healthy eating guide : salt / Tesco Stores Ltd.**

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# Healthy Eating Guide



FOOD  
ADVICE  
SERVICE

at  
**TESCO**

## SALT







Tesco has been promoting a healthy balanced diet for 10 years, since Government reports recommended we cut down on fat (particularly saturated fat), sugar and salt, and increase the amount of fibre we eat. These changes are still needed to make our diets more healthy. The Chief Medical Officer, Dr Kenneth Calman has recently said: "I am issuing a challenge to every person in the country to take a small step to improve their own health." Tesco has taken up the challenge and this leaflet helps you understand the issues with regard to salt in the diet.

### WHAT IS SALT?

▲ Salt is the name commonly used for sodium chloride, a compound which occurs naturally in our food. For thousands of years we have added salt to our food in order to preserve it. Because of its preservative properties, salt became a very valuable and important commodity. In the 19th Century, more efficient methods of refining salt were developed and, as salt became cheaper and more widely available, we developed a liking for its taste.

### WHY DO WE NEED SALT?

▲ Salt is made up of 40% sodium and 60% chloride. It is the sodium in salt which plays an important role in controlling the fluid balance in our bodies. Salt is also needed to ensure that our muscles and nerves work properly and to help us maintain normal blood pressure. However, it is thought that too much sodium in the diet may contribute to high blood pressure in some susceptible people.

Having high blood pressure is one factor which increases the risk of developing coronary heart disease, kidney disease and having a stroke.

As it is not always possible to tell who is susceptible to high blood pressure and, because salt is the major source of sodium in our diet, it makes sense to try and cut down on the salt we eat as part of a healthy well-balanced diet.



### HOW MUCH DO WE NEED?

▲ The amount of sodium we actually need in our diet is estimated to be just over 1 1/2 grams per day (which is equivalent to about 3/4 of a teaspoon of salt). We easily consume this amount each day from the sodium which occurs naturally in our food.

### HOW CAN WE CONTROL THE SODIUM IN OUR DIET?

▲ As most of the sodium in our diet comes from salt, cutting down on the salt we add to food at the table and during cooking can go a long way to helping us control our sodium intake. This is especially important when preparing food for babies and young children. (Babies shouldn't have any added salt at all.) Look at the helpful hints on how to reduce the salt in your cooking on the back of this leaflet.

Sodium is also added to foods during manufacture as salt or other compounds such as monosodium glutamate (MSG), sodium bicarbonate and sodium nitrite.

It is often difficult to tell which foods are high in sodium as they may not necessarily taste salty. You will find the sodium content declared on the nutrition information panel of most Tesco brand foods. This figure includes not only the sodium from salt but that from other sodium-containing ingredients too. The chart on the back page will give you a general guide as to which foods are high in sodium.



NUTRITION			
NPKAL COMPOSITION	A 300g (10 1/2 oz) pack		100g (3 1/2 oz) per 100g
	energy	protein	per 100g
Energy	2284kJ (550kcal)	1284kJ (308kcal)	
Fat	58.8g	19.3g	
Carbohydrate	29.4g	9.8g	
of which sugars	2.9g	1.0g	
Fibre	11.5g	3.8g	
of which soluble	11.3g	3.7g	
total monosaccharides	14.4g	4.8g	
polysaccharides	3.8g	1.3g	
Fibre	1.1g	0.4g	
Sodium	5.1g	1.7g	

\*This pack contains approx. 2 servings

INFORMATION	
A 300g serving provides:	
555 CALORIES • 31.5g FAT	





## TRY SOME OF THESE TIPS

- ▲ Gradually reduce the amount of salt you add to food. Your taste buds will quickly adjust as the natural flavour of the food starts to come through.
- ▲ Rice, pasta and fresh and frozen vegetables contain very little sodium, so try not to add salt during cooking.
- ▲ Try reduced-salt versions of products such as canned peas, carrots and baked beans.
- ▲ Avoid eating too many crisps, nuts and other salty snacks, particularly at the pub as they make you thirsty and likely to drink more.
- ▲ If cutting down on salt is difficult, salt substitutes are available. They are not suitable for everyone however. If you have a kidney complaint, or are under medical supervision, you should ask your doctor for advice before using these products.

## HIGH SODIUM FOODS

Table salt	Cured or canned meats
Smoked fish	Prawns
Dried packet soup	Stock cubes
Baked beans in tomato	Sausages and burgers
Canned soup	Tomato ketchup
Bread	Hard cheeses
Breakfast cereals	Milk
Pickles and salad dressings	Crisps
Dry roasted peanuts	Fish fingers
Very low fat spread	Salted butter and margarine

## HOW CAN TESCO HELP?

Look out for the Healthy Eating product range (clearly marked with a large Healthy Eating Man symbol). This has been specially developed to be lower in fat and saturated fat, higher in fibre and to provide the right balance of sugar and salt. You'll also find a comprehensive range of information leaflets, menu planners, recipe cards and recipe leaflets in our store to help you plan a balanced diet.



The Healthy Eating Guide to Salt is one in a series of leaflets.  
For any advice on food and health write to:  
Food Advice Service, Tesco House, P.O. Box 18, Cheshunt, Herts EN8 9SL.  
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