



Salt Awareness Notice

Did you know?

Many South Africans eat double the daily-recommended amount of salt without knowing it. Half of the salt we consume comes from 'hidden salt', which is added during the food manufacturing process. The other half comes from the salt that we add to our food before we eat it.

Too much salt can damage your health and lead to health complications such as high blood pressure, strokes and heart disease.

High blood pressure, often referred to as the 'silent killer', generally has no symptoms and often strikes unexpectedly.

To be safe, you should have your blood pressure checked at least once a year. If you are diagnosed with high blood pressure, it is important to take the medication prescribed to you as instructed by a doctor or nurse.

How much salt should I eat?

The [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#) recommends no more than 5 grams (one teaspoon) of salt daily or 2000 mg of sodium per day. This amount includes the salt that you add to your food as well as the 'hidden salt' added during the manufacturing process.

Always read the label on your food products

Most food packaging provides nutritional information about the product, including the amount of salt it contains. You should check for salt, sodium, MSG, baking soda or baking powder. If any of these words appear in the first **three ingredients** on the food label, it is likely to be high in salt.

How can I reduce the amount of salt I eat?

- Cut down your salt intake by adding less salt to your food when you are cooking or at the table.
- Use fresh ingredients, herbs and spices to flavour your food instead of using salt. Some good options include fresh or dried parsley and rosemary, pepper, curry powder, paprika, garlic, ginger or chili; as well as onions, vinegar or lemon juice.
- Try eating more fresh foods as it contains less salt than processed foods.
- Avoid foods that have a high salt content, including, among others:
 - Take-away meals (burgers, pizza)
 - Snack foods (chips, crackers)
 - Processed meats (bacon, ham, sausages, salami, corned beef, biltong, viennas, lunchmeat, canned meat, etc.)
 - Packet soups and gravies
 - Bread and breakfast cereal
 - Sauces, stock cubes and seasoning salts
 - Ready-made meals and frozen microwave meals
 - Cheese
- Always look out for **the Heart Mark logo** on food packaging to help you choose healthier food options.

The [Heart Mark Programme](#) is part of ongoing efforts by the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA) to reduce the number of deaths caused by preventable heart disease and stroke.

For more information:

Visit: www.heartfoundationsa.co.za

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