

# Keep Your Heart in Mind: Eat Less Salt and Sodium

## Do you know your blood pressure numbers?

- A normal blood pressure is below **120/80 mmHg**.
- If your blood pressure is **120/80 to 139/89 mmHg**, you have **prehypertension**. This means that you don't have high blood pressure yet, but you're likely to develop it if you don't change your health habits.
- If your blood pressure is **140/90 mmHg** or higher, you have hypertension or high blood pressure. High blood pressure does not go away by itself. Ask your doctor for help in lowering it.
- Ask your doctor what your blood pressure number is. Keep track of each reading on your wallet card.



Write down your blood pressure reading here:



## Spice it up!

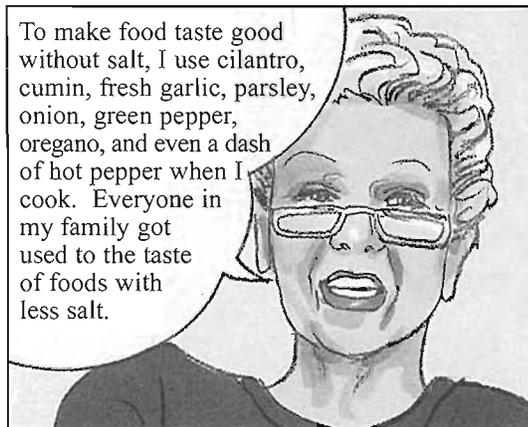
Discover how much flavor you can add by using spices and herbs.

Doña Fela has learned that it's not hard to get your family to eat less salt and sodium.

To break your family's habit of using the saltshaker at the table, try Doña Fela's secret recipe!

Look for other salt-free seasonings in the grocery store.

To make food taste good without salt, I use cilantro, cumin, fresh garlic, parsley, onion, green pepper, oregano, and even a dash of hot pepper when I cook. Everyone in my family got used to the taste of foods with less salt.



**Doña Fela's Seasoning Mixture**  
Fill the saltshaker with these herbs and spices, and use it instead of salt to flavor foods.

¼ cup chili powder  
2 tablespoons paprika  
2 teaspoons oregano  
½ teaspoon dry mustard  
1 teaspoon garlic powder  
1 teaspoon black pepper  
½ teaspoon red pepper

## Take the lead and try these simple changes:

### When Shopping

1. Buy fresh, frozen, or no-salt-added canned vegetables. Choose food packed in water instead of in broth or salt.
2. Buy fresh garlic or garlic powder instead of garlic salt. 
3. Choose foods labeled “low sodium,” “sodium free,” or “no salt added.”

### When Cooking

1. Slowly cut back on the amount of salt added when cooking until you don't use any.
2. Add no salt to the water when cooking beans, rice, pasta, and vegetables. 
3. Cut back on meats high in sodium, such as bologna, ham, hotdogs, and sausage.
4. Rinse all canned products to reduce the amount of sodium.

### When Eating

1. Fill the saltshaker with a mixture of herbs and spices. 
2. Slowly cut back on the amount of salt added at the table until you don't use any.
3. Choose fruits and vegetables instead of salty snacks like chips, fries, and pork rinds.



Mariano has learned to control his high blood pressure. He takes his blood pressure pills with breakfast every morning to make sure that he doesn't forget to take them. He walks daily, has stopped smoking, and has found that food can still taste good with less salt and sodium.

## Make your personal pledge to do what Mariano has done! Look at these examples:

### Breakfast

Cook oatmeal with fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk, raisins, cinnamon, and no salt.

### Lunch

Use leftover roasted chicken to make a sandwich instead of using luncheon meats.



### Dinner

Make your own soup with vegetables and half the usual amount of salt.



### Snack

Eat an orange (without salt) instead of salty chips.

## Write the changes you will make this week:

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**Your health and your family's health are priceless.  
Make an investment in it!**