



how Sodium Savvy

is your food service?

Consumers love choice, and many of them want to choose lower sodium foods when they dine out. As a food service establishment, you may be thinking: “How can I respond to my customers’ preferences for lower sodium in my menu items?”

Most American adults should consume no more than 1,500 mg of sodium per day. Too much sodium can raise blood pressure and can lead to heart attack and stroke. Many food service meals can meet or exceed an entire day’s worth of sodium in just one sitting.

Whether you answer “yes” or “no” to the questions, offering lower sodium, heart-healthy menu options can help you gain loyal customers—and help those customers lead longer, healthier lives while still enjoying delicious meals.



sodium savvy
SCHENECTADY COUNTY

For more information: www.schenectadycounty.com/sodium

yes no

What’s on the menu? *Do you...*

1	Usually serve salad dressing on the side?		
2	Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables as side dishes (including side salads)?		
3	Offer multiple menu items that do not come with bacon and/or cheese automatically?		
4	Offer several entrées, appetizers, or sides in smaller portions?		

How did you make that dish? *Do you...*

5	Prepare most menu items in-house from fresh ingredients (instead of pre-made or pre-packaged foods)?		
6	Measure salt and/or soup base when cooking?		
7	Use salt sparingly when cooking?		
8	Use a lower sodium soup base, reduced amounts of soup base, or no soup base when cooking?		
9	Prepare vegetable side dishes without added butter or salt?		

What’s in that meal? *Do you...*

10	Usually purchase raw meat and poultry products without sodium added?		
11	Purchase fresh or frozen (no sauce) vegetables most of the time?		
12	Purchase any lower sodium products, such as soup base, deli meats, or canned tomatoes?		
13	Purchase unsalted, uncoated (not batter-coated) French fries?		
14	Ask food suppliers for lower sodium options to sample and potentially purchase?		

score

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How does your food service stack up on sodium?

Count the “yes” answers...

- ★ **0–5: Sodium Aware.** You could use some help getting started. Check out the scorecard on the back to make your food service more sodium savvy!
- ★★ **6–10: Sodium Friendly.** You’re doing pretty well. Try out some of the tips from the scorecard on the back to become even more sodium savvy!
- ★★★ **11–14: Sodium Savvy.** You’re doing great! Keep up the good work, and share your lessons learned with others!

Sodium Savvy

food service scorecard



Even food service establishments that already are working to reduce sodium across their menu offerings can benefit from these helpful tips.

tip



What's on the menu? *Do you...*

1	Usually serve salad dressing on the side?	Serving dressing on the side in a 2 oz. container can lower sodium by 100–300 mg!
2	Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables as side dishes (including side salads)?	Sides made of fresh or frozen (no sauce) fruits and vegetables can be up to 500 mg lower in sodium than chips or coated French fries.
3	Offer multiple menu items that do not come with bacon and/or cheese automatically?	A single slice of bacon or cheese contains around 200 mg of sodium.
4	Offer several entrées, appetizers, or sides in smaller portions?	Less food on the plate means reducing sodium by 30%–50%!

How did you make that dish? *Do you...*

5	Prepare most menu items in-house from fresh ingredients (instead of pre-made or pre-packaged foods)?	Meals prepared from scratch with unprocessed ingredients usually are lower in sodium.
6	Measure salt and/or soup base when cooking?	Measuring these ingredients increases awareness of added sodium.
7	Use salt sparingly when cooking?	Just 1 teaspoon of salt contains 2,300 mg of sodium, so use it sparingly.
8	Use a lower sodium soup base, reduced amounts of soup base, or no soup base when cooking?	Lower sodium base has 500–700 mg less sodium per teaspoon than regular base. A base that lists meat as the first ingredient also can help lower sodium—higher flavor concentration means you don't use as much in the dish.
9	Prepare vegetable side dishes without added butter or salt?	Butter and butter products add up to 100 mg of sodium per tablespoon.

What's in that meal? *Do you...*

10	Usually purchase raw meat and poultry products without sodium added?	Raw meat and poultry products have only naturally occurring sodium.
11	Purchase fresh or frozen (no sauce) vegetables most of the time?	Fresh and frozen (no sauce) vegetables have lower sodium. If you buy canned vegetables, choose no salt added varieties.
12	Purchase any lower sodium products, such as soup base, deli meats, or canned tomatoes?	These products can reduce sodium by 100–700 mg, depending on the item.
13	Purchase unsalted, uncoated (not batter-coated) French fries?	These heart-healthier fries can reduce sodium by 450 mg in a 3 oz. serving.
14	Ask food suppliers for lower sodium options to sample and potentially purchase?	Asking alerts your representative that you are interested in offering these products to customers!

