



SALT

So you might be thinking what's all the fuss about? I only have a sprinkling of salt on my chips. This not so sweet mealtime accompaniment has the power to wreak havoc in our bodies causing much more than just flavour enhancement!

HOW?

Salt is made up of sodium and chloride. Eating too much salt can increase our blood pressure. High blood pressure can lead to heart disease, cardiovascular disease and stroke as an adult. The higher the blood pressure in childhood, the higher the blood pressure in adulthood, which is why it is important to ensure salt intake and blood pressure are not increased throughout life.

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Most people in the UK have higher than recommended intakes. Children 11+ and adults should consume no more than 6g salt per day; this is the equivalent to one teaspoon of salt!

WHERE?

Salt is present in many foods we eat. It is added as a preservative and during processing in foods such as in hams, bacon, bread and cheese. It can also be added to flavour convenience foods in high amounts. Salt already found in food contributes to 75% of the salt we eat - the rest comes from salt added during cooking or at the table.

TOP TIPS

Easy ways to reduce your salt intake include:

- Avoid using salt in your cooking.
- Don't add salt to your food when you sit down to eat.
- Be more selective when choosing foods by reading food labels and choosing lower salt options e.g. lower sodium tomato ketchup.

FOOD LABELING:

- Foods high in salt have more than 1.5g salt per 100g.
 - Foods with a moderate amount of salt contain between 0.3g and 1.5g salt per 100g.
 - Foods low in salt have less than 0.3g salt per 100g
- Traffic light labelling makes it easier to see the amount of individual nutrients (fat, saturates, sugar, salt) within a product at a glance:

Red = High, Amber = Medium, Green = Low

SALT OR SODIUM

The sodium content of a food is often listed on the packaging instead of salt. This can be deceiving and can often make the product look lower in salt. To obtain the salt content of a food when only the sodium content is listed you must multiply the sodium content by 2.5. For example: sodium = 0.2g
 $0.2g \times 2.5 = 0.5g$ salt.

Therefore a product which initially looked low in salt is actually in the medium salt content bracket.