

Too much salt might make you gain weight

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(HealthDay)—Too much salt has long been linked to high blood pressure. In fact, one way to help control blood pressure is to reduce your salt intake. Research done at Vanderbilt University and published in

The Journal of Clinical Investigation shows that salt may also be involved in weight gain.

Traditional thinking has been that [salty foods](#) make people drink more water, but the scientists found that it actually reduces thirst and makes people more prone to overeating, weight gain and even metabolic syndrome, which can lead to diabetes and other serious conditions.

Packaged Foods With High Salt Content

- Smoked and cured meats, like frankfurters
- Frozen dinners
- Canned meals
- Salted nuts and seeds
- Processed cheeses
- Crackers and croutons

Since most Americans eat 50% more salt than recommended on a daily basis, it's more important than ever to find ways to cut back. The National Kidney Foundation suggests limiting prepared foods with a [high salt content](#).

In addition to packaged and deli meats, some canned and frozen foods, from beans to vegetables, can have very high salt levels, so always read labels. Foods you may not associate with being salty could still have sodium in the ingredients. Look for no-salt-added brands. When that's not possible, rinse the food under cold running water to remove as much salt as possible.

When cooking and seasoning foods, replace salt—including garlic salt and onion salt—with herbs and spices. Pure granulated garlic and freeze-dried onions should be acceptable alternatives.

At restaurants, ask the chef to limit the salt in your food and reach for the pepper, not the salt shaker, if a dish needs more seasoning.

Give yourself up to eight weeks to undo a salt habit. Once you lose your taste for it, you'll also find it a lot easier to taste when foods have too much salt in them.

More information: The National Kidney Foundation has more ways to [reduce salt](#) in your diet.

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