

Good nutrition and balanced food choices, together with medication are vital for managing blood pressure (hypertension) and the symptoms of primary aldosteronism (PA).

Selecting low-sodium foods and potassium-rich options can boost both mental and physical wellbeing. Building healthy eating habits involves enjoying a range of nutrient-rich foods from all five major food groups every day.

www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating

Salt (Sodium)

Salt or sodium chloride is common in our diet, but too much salt can directly raise blood pressure. While some salt is naturally found in foods, most of it is added by food manufacturers as hidden salt. Processed foods are the primary source of sodium in our diet, contributing about 75%. In contrast, unprocessed foods like fresh fruits, vegetables, milk, meat, fish, and poultry have minimal sodium. The remaining sodium comes from salt added during cooking or at the table (15%) and the natural sodium present in foods (10%).

Foods that are high in salt are major contributors to our salt intake are:

- processed meats such as bacon, ham, salami, corned silverside and sausages
- bread and pastries
- most fast foods such as pizza, hamburgers, fried chicken
- salted snack convenience foods such as chips
- pickles, condiments and sauces

www.healthdirect.gov.au/salt

Tips to keep salt intake down.

Most Australians eat too much salt, often double the maximum recommended for good health. For people with PA, this is often 3 times too much



Do's

- Choose fresh foods rather than processed/packaged foods
- Choose foods that are "low salt" or "no added salt"
- Use herbs, spices, pepper, garlic, onion, chilli or lemon to flavour foods
- Read labels and choose foods with less than 120mg sodium per 100g
- Monitor your sodium intake using an App or paper based record system



Don't's

- Avoid obviously salty foods
- Beware of processed foods that don't taste salty, such as bread
- Don't add salt to your meals at the table or during cooking
- Avoid foods with more than 400mg of sodium per 100g
- Don't go over 1500mg sodium per day

Reading food labels

To better manage your salt intake, check the sodium content on food labels. Manufacturers update their ingredient lists often and sodium may vary across different flavours of the same product. By reading labels regularly, you can make lower salt choices. Start with the labels on the foods in your pantry!

www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/eatingwell/efh_food_label_example_130621.pdf

Look for sodium on the per 100g column of the food label

Food with less than **400mg per 100g** are good. Food less than **120mg per 100g** are better.

Choose lower sodium options among similar foods.

What is the difference?

- No Added Salt: No salt added during manufacturing of the food
- Low Salt: Food contains no more than 120mg of sodium per 100g
- Reduced Salt: Must contain at least 25% less sodium than the regular food. These products may still be too high in salt so check the food label

Potassium

Potassium is naturally found in all foods and plays a role in regulating blood pressure. Low potassium levels are often associated with PA patients. Include at least five servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit daily.

Potassium intake can be increased by including generous servings of potassium rich foods in all your meals and snacks. Check with your doctor before increasing potassium intake from food or using potassium based salt if you have chronic kidney disease or on drugs that reduce potassium excretion.

www.healthdirect.gov.au/foods-high-in-potassium

Potassium rich foods

Fruits

- Bananas, melons, oranges, nectarines, kiwifruit, mango, pawpaw, prunes, pomegranate, avocado
- Dried fruits, dried figs, dried apricots, dates, prunes

Vegetables

- Sweet potatoes, parsnips, pumpkin, potatoes,
- Tomato and tomato-based products
- Broccoli, dark leafy green vegetables e.g. spinach, kale
- Dried legumes, lentils and peas, baked beans

Proteins

- Meat, fish, poultry
- Milk, yoghurt
- Nuts and seeds

Cereals

- Wholegrains e.g. bran cereal, oats, granola, muesli, brown rice, quinoa

Other

- Dark chocolate, molasses, peanut butter
- Coconut water, fruit juice, vegetable juices, smoothies

Low Sodium and High Potassium Eating Plans

Healthy Eating

- Follow the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating
- Choose low salt foods
- No salt in cooking and at the table
- Choose plenty of vegetables and fruit

[Australian guide to healthy eating | Eat For Health](#)

www.eatforhealth.gov.au/eating-well/tips-eating-well/eating-away-home

Standard DASH Diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension):

The DASH diet is a healthy eating plan designed to manage high blood pressure. The diet promotes nutrient-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy while limiting foods high in sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.

www.heartsmartaustralia.com/blog/dash-meal-plan-healthy-eating-to-lower-your-blood-pressure/

Monitor and Adjust Diet

Effectively managing PA involves coordinating your diet, medication, blood test results, symptoms and lifestyle. High sodium intake lowers blood potassium levels by increasing potassium excretion in the kidneys. Insufficient potassium intake and low blood potassium levels can lead to symptoms like high blood pressure, headache, lethargy, anxiety and brain fog. People with PA may improve symptoms by reducing sodium intake to below 2300mg daily

but ideally to below 1500 mg. A daily intake of 3500–5000 mg of potassium from food sources is recommended to support overall health.

The **low sodium DASH diet** provides 1500 mg/day of sodium and 4700mg/day of potassium www.nhlbi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/WeekOnDASH.pdf.

An Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) can help you with a personalised nutrition plan.

Recipes

- Heart Foundation recipes: www.heartfoundation.org.au/recipes
- DASH recipes: www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/recipes/dash-diet-recipes/rcs-20077146
- Healthy Food low sodium recipes: www.healthyfood.com/health-information/healthy-low-sodium-recipes/

Useful Apps

Use a nutrition tracking app to monitor your sodium and potassium – it's a simple way to stay on track and reach your daily goals.

- **Food Switch App:** Scans the barcode of a foods to show the amount of sodium and potassium, displays a list of similar healthier choice products. www.foodswitch.com/app/foodswitch/
- **Cronometer App:** A detailed food tracking app that is useful for estimating nutrient intake including sodium and potassium, log meals and track sodium. www.cronometer.com/
- **Calorie King Food Search App:** Find Australian nutrition information on sodium from fast food chains, takeaway foods and international foods. www.calorieking.com/au/en/products/food-search/

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