The American Heart Association recommends limiting sodium intake to 2,300 milligrams per day (or roughly 1 teaspoon of table salt) for the general public, or 1,500 milligrams a day if you have high blood pressure. It only takes a few weeks for your taste buds to adapt to a lower sodium intake. Gradually decreasing sodium a bit at a time can help ease the transition.

**Sodium-free flavoring tips for various foods:**

- **Beef:** bay leaf, garlic, marjoram, nutmeg, onion, pepper, sage, thyme
- **Lamb:** curry powder, garlic, mint, rosemary
- **Pork:** garlic, onion, oregano, pepper, sage
- **Veal:** bay leaf, curry powder, ginger, marjoram
- **Chicken:** ginger, lemon or lime juice, marjoram, oregano, paprika, poultry seasoning, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme
- **Fish:** basil, curry powder, dill, dry mustard, lemon or lime juice, marjoram, parsley, pepper
- **Tofu/tempeh:** chives, curry, garlic, nutritional yeast, onion, paprika, pepper, shallots
- **Vegetables:** basil, dill, garlic, onion, oregano, paprika, parsley, pepper, rosemary, sage, thyme

**Other flavoring ideas to use instead of salt:**

- Fruit juices thickened with cornstarch or plain yogurt mixed with seasonings can tenderize meats or be used as marinades, sauces, or glazes.
- All types of vinegar can be used as marinades or dressings without adding sodium.
- Citrus zest (orange, lemon, etc.) can be added to marinades or dry rubs.
- Hot spices and peppers, such as cayenne, chilies and jalapenos, give “kick” without adding sodium.
- Sesame oil or herb-infused oils can be drizzled on meats, veggies or breads, rice, and/or pasta.

It's also important to note that salt added to food when cooking or at the table only accounts for a small percentage of daily sodium intake. On average, about 70% of daily sodium intake comes from restaurant foods and processed foods. Limiting dining out to no more than twice a week and eating unprocessed foods most of the time are major ways to reduce sodium intake.