



## Whichever salt you use, consume less

### Is sea salt more healthful than regular salt?

While some foodies extol the virtues of their favorite gourmet salt (did you know there's Hawaiian sea salt, French sea salt, Italian sea salt, and even smoked sea salt?), nutritionists usually don't advocate one type over another.

Sea salt contains just as much sodium as table salt. While sea salt might contain traces of other minerals, such as iron and potassium, hopefully you wouldn't use so much salt that those tiny amounts would make a difference in your nutrition profile anyway.

Still, different kinds of salts do offer differences in texture and taste. If you're curious, you might go ahead and experiment with different types of salt. For example, kosher salt is said to have a stronger flavor than regular table salt. If you find that to be true, you might end up using less salt than you normally would — consuming less sodium in the process.

It's important to note that sodium intake is far from limited to the salt shaker. Most of the sodium Americans consume comes from processed foods, not table salt. In fact, according to mayoclinic.com, just 5 percent of the sodium we consume is added while cooking; 6 percent is added while eating; 12 percent comes from natural sources other than salt; and 77 percent comes from processed and prepared foods.

The American Dietetic Association suggests reducing salt intake by:

- Eating more fresh foods, such as

fruits, vegetables, meats and poultry, and less processed foods.

- Cooking noodles, rice and hot cereals without adding salt.
- Cutting by one-third to one-half the amount of salt and high-sodium seasonings (such as lemon pepper, meat tenderizer or other seasonings) while cooking.
- Using more herbs, spices, balsamic or wine vinegar, or salt-free seasoning blends instead of salt.
- When choosing frozen convenience meals, look for fewer than 800 milligrams of sodium per serving.

Authorities recommend that people consume no more than 2,300 milligrams of sodium a day, but most Americans get far more than that. While not everyone's health is affected by salt intake, there's no easy test available to tell you if you are sensitive to salt or not. Salt-sensitive individuals might get high blood pressure if they consume too much salt — but they might not. Some research suggests that salt increases the reactivity of platelets — the tiny blood elements that help the blood to clot. So, high dietary sodium might lead to cardiovascular events like stroke, heart attack and kidney disease directly, even in people without hypertension. So, it's a good idea to keep an eye on your sodium intake, no matter what kind of salt you like.

*Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH, 43210-1044, or [filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu](mailto:filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu).*



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