

Borscht Soup

The ingredient list below can be shortened or more ingredients can be added (to taste and desires).

Makes 8 cups

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 cup chopped onion
1 cup chopped green bell pepper
5 cloves garlic, crushed
4 cups Napa cabbage, shredded thinly
1/2 cup shredded carrots
1 large beet, peeled and shredded coarsely
2 large red potatoes cut into quarters
6 cups no-sodium bottled water
2 bay leaves
1 teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon sugar or Splenda®
1/2 teaspoon dill
1 1/2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
Pepper to taste

In a large stockpot, heat the oil over medium heat and then add next three ingredients, stirring frequently. Cook for about 5 minutes. Add remaining ingredients except the vinegar. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 25 to 35 minutes, or until veggies are tender. Add the vinegar (more to taste if you like). Chill overnight in refrigerator, reheat, and serve. May serve with a dollop of light sour cream (15 mg sodium).

Per serving: 112 calories, 2 g fat, 0.3 g saturated fat, 3 g protein, 21 g carbohydrates, 2.8 g fiber, 11 mg sodium (26 mg if using sour cream).



Reduce sodium and keep your taste buds happy at the same time

By Sacha Cohen

PICNICS, GRILLING, AND BARBECUE. Ah, the beloved staples of summertime. Yet with these seasonal traditions come many salty foods. From the ketchup, pickles, and American cheese you pile on your charcoal-grilled burger to the sodium-laden dips and chips served on the side, it's easy to load up on salt during warm-weather months.

Should you be concerned? Unfortunately, yes.

High sodium intake has been linked to high blood pressure and kidney disease (up to 40 percent of people with lupus will develop kidney problems). And when your kidneys aren't healthy, extra sodium and fluid build up in your body, which can cause swollen ankles, puffiness, a rise in blood pressure, shortness of breath, and/or fluid around your heart and lungs.

By cutting back on sodium, you can improve kidney function and lower water retention brought on by some medications, including steroids, says Christine Gerbstadt, M.D., R.D., a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association in Chicago.

According to the Mayo Clinic, about 11 percent of the sodium in the average U.S. diet comes from adding salt or other sodium-containing condiments



Don's Quick Barbecue Sauce

This is a quick and easy barbecue sauce that spreads well on meats. Delicious on chicken, burgers, and ribs.

Makes 1 cup

1 cup chopped onion
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 8-ounce can no-salt-added tomato sauce
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon thyme
1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
1/4 teaspoon tarragon
1 pinch ground cloves
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
pinch of cayenne pepper (optional)

In a deep saucepan, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onions and sauté for 5 minutes, or until onions become translucent.

Add rest of ingredients. Mix well.

Bring mixture to a boil, stirring occasionally. Lower heat and simmer for an additional 10 minutes.

Brush on chicken, burgers, or ribs while grilling.

Per serving (1 tablespoon): 36 calories, 1.7 g fat, 5.5 g carbohydrates, 6 mg sodium.



to foods. But the majority of sodium—77 percent—comes from eating prepared or processed foods.

“Watch out for fast food and restaurants in general. They add far more salt to their food than you would at home,” warns Gerbstadt. Most physicians recommend that healthy adults eat 2,300 milligrams or less per day, which is about a teaspoon.

To reduce your sodium consumption, avoid:

- Processed and packaged food (canned soups, cheese, frozen meals, mixes)
- Fast food
- Snack foods (chips, pretzels, popcorn, cookies)
- Prepared salad dressing and sauces
- Pickles and olives
- Canned vegetables and soups
- Cured and smoked meats (bacon, hot dogs, cold cuts)
- Condiments such as ketchup and soy sauce (opt for readily available, lower-sodium varieties)
- Salted nuts and peanut butter (again, choose lower-salt versions)

Cutting back on salt doesn't mean you'll have to sacrifice flavor or your fa-

vorite seasonal treats. Try experimenting with spices and herbs to invigorate your cooking. Ginger and garlic can do wonders for grilled chicken, seafood, and meat, while lemon, lime, and vinegar add tang and depth to salads and vegetable dishes.

“Try eating sweet corn without salt or salted butter,” advises Gerbstadt. “You'll be amazed by the flavor.”

This summer, stock up on:

- Fresh and dried herbs and spices such as basil, cumin, paprika, oregano, rosemary, sage, and thyme
- Fresh ginger and garlic (both go well with grilled chicken and fish)
- Fresh fruits and veggies
- Lower-sodium ketchup and soy sauce
- No-salt-added beans and legumes
- Low-sodium, natural cheese

As you begin to wean yourself off salt, you'll not only be doing your body a favor, but you'll also expand your culinary horizons as well. ■

Recipes are adapted from *The No Salt, Lowest Sodium Light Meals Book* by Donald Gazzaniga. Cookbooks are available at www.megaheart.com or www.amazon.com.

Guacamole

Instead of salty chips, serve with whole-wheat pita points (toasted pita cut into bite-sized points), low-salt or no-salt tortilla chips (Bearitos, Guiltless Gourmet, and Whole Foods brands are good), or raw vegetables.

Makes: 2 cups or 32 tablespoons

2 avocados, California or Hass variety
1/2 cup onion, chopped
1 jalapeño chili, chopped to equal 1 tablespoon
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 seeded fresh tomato, chopped
3 tablespoons lemon juice

Peel and mash avocados. A potato masher works fine. Add all other ingredients and mix thoroughly. Best if eaten same day, but if you want to save for the next day, layer remainder with fresh lemon juice and plastic wrap. Refrigerate. If top layer darkens, just scrape it off before serving.

Per serving (1 tablespoon): 21 calories, 0.3 g protein, 1.6 g fat, 1.6 g carbohydrates, 1.2 mg.

