

Media Release

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SHAKE THE HABIT: TEN TIPS TO REDUCE SALT IN YOUR DIET

With many Australians risking their lives eating too much salt, VicHealth is encouraging people to shake the habit and reduce their salt intake.

This week, (March 16-22), marks Salt Awareness Week and with the majority of Australians consuming almost double the amount of salt recommended for good health, VicHealth has outlined ten tips to help people reduce salt in their diet.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said research shows that salt kills 1.6 million people a year worldwide.

“Salt increases the risk of high blood pressure and the risk of cardiovascular disease including heart attack, stroke and blood vessel disease.

“Most salt in the Australian diet comes from added salt in processed foods so people are often unaware of how much they’re eating. Shoppers need to be aware of hidden salt in the processed foods we eat every day, which are commonly found in most people’s shopping trollies like bread, breakfast cereal, cheese, processed meats and ready-made sauces,” Ms Rechter said.

Ten tips for reducing your salt intake

1. Eat more fresh vegetables and fruit which are naturally low in salt.
2. Cut back on salty packaged or processed foods such as potato chips and other salty snack foods, packet soups and sauces, pies, sausage rolls, sausages, pizzas, and ready-made meals.
3. Check food labels or use the [FoodSwitch](#) app to choose lower salt foods. On food labels, look for foods with less than 400mg of sodium per 100g. The best choices are foods with less than 120mg of sodium per 100g.
4. Buy ‘reduced-salt’ breads and breakfast cereals, or check the food label to find the lower salt option.
5. Cut back on processed meats such as bacon, ham, chorizo, and salami.
6. When cooking, limit salty sauces and condiments such as stock, soy and fish sauce, and table salt. Choose lower salt/sodium varieties if available.
7. Use herbs, garlic, and pepper as seasonings as they are naturally low in salt.
8. Take the salt shaker off the table.
9. Eat takeaway meals and foods only occasionally.
10. Follow the Australian Dietary Guidelines. For more information, see www.eatforhealth.gov.au.

Ms Rechter said reducing salt in the Australian diet was one of the most cost-effective ways to improve the health of Australia. “Research shows that reducing Australia’s salt intake by 30% would save 3400 lives a year and millions of dollars in healthcare,” she added.

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