

# How To Lower Your Sodium Intake

## *Tips For Better Health*

Sodium makes the body retain fluid, forcing the heart to work even harder and make breathing more difficult. Salt is a major source of sodium. Reducing sodium will help reduce excess fluid in your body. This will help you feel better. The following will assist you with reducing your sodium intake.

**Your sodium intake may be limited to about 2,000mg or less a day.** I should limit sodium to \_\_\_\_\_mg a day.

- **Remove the salt shaker** from your table. You will be less likely to use it.
- **Use spices, herbs and other seasonings** instead of salt to flavor food. Try garlic, oregano, basil, curry, onion, parsley, rosemary, lemon juice, etc.
- **Eat fresh and frozen vegetables** instead of canned vegetables. Canned vegetables can be very high in sodium because salt is used as a preservative. (Some frozen vegetables, such as those with cheese or cream sauces, can be high in sodium.)
- **Eat fresh fish, poultry, and meat** instead of canned or processed meats.
- **Snack on fresh vegetables** instead of salty snack foods, such as pretzels, popcorn or chips.
- **Avoid salted crackers**, muffins and biscuits that contain salt, and stuffing mixes.
- **Avoid salt substitutes** and spices that taste salty. They generally contain other forms of salt that can be just as harmful. They may also contain potassium, which can significantly change your potassium level, especially if potassium supplements are used.
- **Check the sodium content** of foods. (Your PhoenixCare Nurse has available information on reading food labels.) Many frozen dinners, canned soups and condiments are high in sodium.
- **Many over-the-counter medications** contain sodium, too. Ask your pharmacist about the sodium content of the medications you take.
- **Good News!** Your craving for salt will diminish over time as you replace salt with your favorite seasoning.