

## You. Your Patrons. And The Low Sodium Diet Impact.

### Let's Talk About YOU.

Your heart will beat approximately 100,000 times today.

On a related note, you'll probably take in about 2000 mg of sodium (if you're very sodium conscientious) – or about 5000 mg (if you're among typical U.S. consumers) – or possibly over 10,000 mg if you eat poorly with regards to sodium-intake. Medical experts recommend less than 2400 mg of sodium per day. Even less if you're among the young or elderly.

Sodium makes your body hold on to fluid. Pumping the added fluid requires your heart to work much harder. If your blood pressure is too high, it can damage the blood vessels and affect blood flow to vital organs.

### Let's Talk About Your Foodservice Patrons.

Okay, maybe you needn't be concerned about hypertension/high blood pressure, heart disease, fluid retention/edema, kidney stones, strokes, and the like ... but many of your customers may be. And for them, the amount of salt/sodium in their diet, may be of concern.

Most people in the U.S. take in more sodium than they need... which contributes to the medical problems listed above. These people (your customers) would benefit from cutting down on the amount of salt/sodium they eat. And that's exactly the message more and more patrons are receiving from their doctors.

### Here are SOME of the dietary RECOMMENDATIONS your patrons are receiving

- Processed foods, and restaurant foods, account for about 75% of our sodium intake
- Read package labels and menu descriptions carefully. Choose foods that have less salt.
- Be aware that many restaurant foods are very high in sodium. Seek out nutritional information on restaurant websites, on-premise posters, restaurant nutrition guides, napkins, etc.
- Ask the chef to go "easy on the salt" when possible.
- Try to avoid adding salt to food at the table. (Table salt is typically 40% sodium.)
- Consider salt-substitute products and low sodium seasonings. Also look for low sodium drinks, margarine, condiments, etc.
- Overall, try to have less than 2400 milligrams of SODIUM per day – that's the equivalent of 6 grams of SALT per day (or about ONE TEASPOON OF SALT PER DAY, TOTAL).

The affects of such "low sodium awareness" are being seen in foodservice from coast to coast. Multi-unit operators often post nutritional information on their website. "All Natural" and "Heart Smart" offerings are becoming more and more prevalent. Servers are being prepped to better answer questions regarding the food preparation. On-premise signage and menu inserts often point out the nutritional merits of featured foods. And operators are taking the time to strike a better balance between flavor and nutrition ... strategically pricing their flavorful, healthful, on-trend offerings.

### Definitions For Low Sodium Claims On Food Labels

**Sodium-free** Less than 5 mg sodium per serving

**Salt-free** Meets requirements for sodium-free

**Low sodium** 140 mg sodium or less per serving

**Very low sodium** 35 mg sodium or less per serving

**Light in sodium** 50% less sodium per serving when compared to foods with more than 40 calories per serving or more than 3 grams of fat per serving

**Unsalted/No added salt** No added salt during processing. The product it resembles is normally processed with salt.

#### Note:

"Low sodium awareness" is well engrained in healthcare. And it will continue to grow and influence other segments as well. Think of it as an opportunity. Maybe it will make your heart beat a little faster ... in a good way This article includes information from the University of Michigan, University of Iowa, Columbia University Medical Center and NHLBI.nih.gov.

