

Me and My Sodium Intake

Sodium Learning Activity

Action Schools! BC

6

SODIUM

Being aware of the presence and amount of sodium contained in various foods is a critical step to making informed food choices. Students will continue to gain an understanding of which foods to limit in terms of sodium content, and set personal sodium-reduction goals for themselves.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



BIG IDEAS

- Healthy choices influence our physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES:

- Explore and plan food choices to support personal health and well-being.
- Describe the impacts of personal choices on health and well-being.
- Analyze health messages and possible intentions to influence behaviour.
- Identify, apply, and reflect on strategies used to pursue personal healthy-living goals.
- Describe and assess strategies for promoting mental well-being, for self and others (through Extension of Learning).

CONTENT

- Influences on food choices.
- Sources of health information.



FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH CONNECTIONS



TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Students will learn that a Nutrition Facts table can help you make informed food choices when grocery shopping and preparing food at home. Learn about what is in a Nutrition Facts table and how to use it. Provide actual labels for students to look at or design a supermarket scavenger hunt where students will examine labels.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Visit a grocery store or market to see which foods have labels and which don't.

PREPARATION

- Review the *Sodium* section of the *Healthy Eating Overview* (included with this activity).
- Photocopy *Me and My Sodium Intake* handout, one per student (see following pages).
- Student Journals

IMPLEMENTATION IDEAS

- Arrange chairs so that students assemble in a talking circle <http://firstnationspedagogy.ca/circletalks.html>. Circles represent important principles in the First Peoples worldview and belief systems, especially interconnectedness, equality, and continuity. Begin by reviewing the information on the *Me and My Sodium Intake* handout.
- Walk students through how to use the *Nutrition Facts Tables* (see top of the Handout).
- At their work spaces invite students to complete the activity on the handout.
- Discuss the food examples provided. Any surprises? Any favourite foods listed?

- Based on these activities, have students set a personal goal around sodium intake. What could they change in their own eating patterns to cut back on sodium? Have them think about who could support them reaching this goal. For ideas, they can refer to the examples provided on the handout, the additional ideas generated by the class, or others. Additional questions that can be discussed:

Q: What kinds of meals might they plan to eat instead of reaching for high sodium foods?

A: Meals that are prepared at home, meals that use less processed and packaged ingredients, meals that include more fresh, frozen or canned vegetables and fruits.

Q: How can they reduce their likelihood of choosing high sodium foods?

A: Plan meals ahead of time, have a snack before going shopping, stock locker at school with healthy choices (fruit, trail mix, cut up veggies, etc.).

Q: How might they look to further inform themselves of the sodium content of foods they are considering?

A: Read the nutrition information on packages before buying, visit fast food restaurant websites/apps to find out which choices are high and low in sodium, choose foods containing more than 15% Daily Value of sodium per serving less often, look for the Informed Dining logo on restaurant menus (Informed Dining is a provincial program that assists British Columbians with the facts they need to make informed choices when dining out. Participating restaurants provide access to nutrition information).

- ANSWER KEY: ME AND MY SODIUM INTAKE NUTRITION FACTS TABLES**

• Fast Food Hot Dog	34% DV
• Ramen Noodle Soup (Prepared)	31% DV
• Large (double patty) Fast Food Hamburger	43% DV
• Fast Food Hawaiian Pizza	49% DV
• Fast Food Chicken Sandwich	50% DV
• Cheese Tortellini Pasta with Tomato Sauce	73% DV

NOTE: all of these food examples far exceed the guideline of “15% is a lot”. The %DV for Sodium on the food label is based on 2400mg, which is higher than the recommended intake for sodium of 1000-1500mg per day for children.

EXTENSION OF LEARNING

- Have the students answer the following statements in their journals:
 - I can help myself make healthy decisions when I...
 - I can help my family and friends make healthy decisions when I...
 - I show I care about myself when I...
 - I show I care about others when I...

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- Healthy Families BC
 - Sodium Resources (www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/articles/topic/sodium)
 - Sodium Sense tool (www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/sodium-sense)
- HealthLink BC (www.healthlinkbc.ca)
 - Call 811 and speak with a registered dietitian
 - Lower Sodium (Salt) Resources (<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/lower-salt-resources>)
- Informed Dining (www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/informed-dining)
- Sodium 101 (www.sodium101.ca)
- First Nations Pedagogy (<http://firstnationspedagogy.ca/circletalks.html>)

NAME _____

Me and My Sodium Intake

How to Use a Nutrition Facts Table to Understand the Sodium Content of Food and Drink

Nutrition Facts Tables are found on most food and drink packages and contain important nutrition information. When assessing a food or drink product for sodium content, follow these three steps:

CHEESE TORTELLINI PASTA WITH TOMATO SAUCE

1
Look at the serving size listed in the Nutrition Facts Table and compare it to how much you actually consume. The serving size is not based on Canada's Food Guide Servings.

2
Find the sodium section on the Nutrition Facts Table.

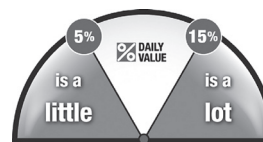
Nutrition Facts		Valeur nutritive	
Per 500 ml (373 g)			
Portion 500 ml (373 g)			
Amount			% Daily Value
Teneur			% valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories	430		
Fat / Lipides	9 g	14%	
Saturated / saturés 4 g 24%			
+ Trans / trans 0 g			
Cholesterol / Cholestérol	50 mg		
Sodium / Sodium	1750 mg	73%	
Carbohydrate / Glucides	73 g	24%	
Fibre / Fibres 6 g 24%			
Sugars / Sucres 12 g			
Protein / Protéines	19 g		
Vitamin A / Vitamine A			25%
Vitamin C / Vitamine C			25%
Calcium / Calcium			20%
Iron / Fer			30%

3
Use the % Daily Value (%DV) on the label to compare products and to see if the food has **a little or a lot** of a nutrient.

Here is a guide:

5% DV or less is **a little**

15% DV or more is **a lot**



5% is **a little**, 15% is **a lot** applies to all nutrients

Check the food labels often because product ingredients may change.

Reference: Interactive Nutrition Label and Quiz, Using the Nutrition Facts Table: % Daily Value, 2010
(hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/label-etiquet/nutrition/cons/fact-fiche-eng.php)

% Daily Value, reproduced with permission from the Minister of Health, Health Canada, 2013 (www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

Check out these sample Nutrition Facts Tables to find out how much sodium is in these common foods.

FAST FOOD HOT DOG

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 45 g wiener, bun, 15 ml ketchup pour 45 g wiener, pain, 15 ml ketchup	
Amount Teneur	% Daily Value % valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 260	
Fat / Lipides 12 g	18%
Saturated / saturés 4.5 g + Trans / trans 0 g	23%
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 25 mg	
Sodium / Sodium 820 mg	34%
Carbohydrate / Glucides 28 g	9%
Fibre / Fibres 1 g	4%
Sugars / Sucres 7 g	
Protein / Protéines 10 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	2%
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	6%
Calcium / Calcium	6%
Iron / Fer	15%

PREPARED RAMEN NOODLE SOUP

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 250 ml (244 g) pour 250 ml (244 g)	
Amount Teneur	% Daily Value % valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 150	
Fat / Lipides 7 g	11%
Saturated / saturés 3.5 g + Trans / trans 0 g	18%
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium / Sodium 750 mg	31%
Carbohydrate / Glucides 19 g	6%
Fibre / Fibres 6 g	24%
Sugars / Sucres 0 g	
Protein / Protéines 3 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	0%
Vitamin C / Vitamine C 0%	
Calcium / Calcium	0%
Iron / Fer	8%

FAST FOOD HAMBURGER LARGE (DOUBLE PATTY)

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 sandwich (209 g) pour 1 sandwich (209 g)	
Amount Teneur	% Daily Value % valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 540	
Fat / Lipides 29 g	45%
Saturated / saturés 10 g + Trans / trans 0.5 g	53%
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 70 mg	
Sodium / Sodium 1020 mg	43%
Carbohydrate / Glucides 44 g	15%
Fibre / Fibres 3 g	12%
Sugars / Sucres 9 g	
Protein / Protéines 24 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	10%
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	4%
Calcium / Calcium	25%
Iron / Fer	35%

FAST FOOD HAWAIIAN PIZZA

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per Slice pour pointe	
Amount Teneur	% Daily Value % valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 670	
Fat / Lipides 24 g	37%
Saturated / saturés 11 g + Trans / trans 0.5 g	57%
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 70 mg	
Sodium / Sodium 1180 mg	49%
Carbohydrate / Glucides 75 g	25%
Fibre / Fibres 4 g	16%
Sugars / Sucres 8 g	
Protein / Protéines 39 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	2%
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	0%
Calcium / Calcium	45%
Iron / Fer	30%

FAST FOOD CHICKEN SANDWICH**Nutrition Facts
Valeur nutritive**Per 1 sandwich (204 g)
pour 1 sandwich (204 g)

Amount Teneur		% Daily Value % valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories	580	
Fat / Lipides	31 g	48%
Saturated / saturés 7 g + Trans / trans 2 g		45%
Cholesterol / Cholestérol	65 mg	
Sodium / Sodium	1200 mg	50%
Carbohydrate / Glucides	50 g	17%
Fibre / Fibres 5 g		20%
Sugars / Sucres 6 g		
Protein / Protéines	26 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A		0%
Vitamin C / Vitamine C		0%
Calcium / Calcium		8%
Iron / Fer		30%

**CHEESE TORTELLINI PASTA
WITH TOMATO SAUCE****Nutrition Facts
Valeur nutritive**Per 500 ml (373 g)
pour 500 ml (373 g)

Amount Teneur		% Daily Value % valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories	430	
Fat / Lipides	9 g	14%
Saturated / saturés 4 g + Trans / trans 0 g		20%
Cholesterol / Cholestérol	50 mg	
Sodium / Sodium	1750 mg	73%
Carbohydrate / Glucides	73 g	24%
Fibre / Fibres 6 g		24%
Sugars / Sucres 12 g		
Protein / Protéines	19 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A		25%
Vitamin C / Vitamine C		25%
Calcium / Calcium		20%
Iron / Fer		30%

**What % DV of sodium do the
Nutrition Facts Tables indicate for these foods?**

Fast Food Hot Dog	_____	%DV
Ramen Noodle Soup (prepared)	_____	%DV
Fast Food Hamburger Large (double patty)	_____	%DV
Fast Food Hawaiian Pizza	_____	%DV
Fast Food Chicken Sandwich	_____	%DV
Cheese Tortellini Pasta with Tomato Sauce	_____	%DV

My Sodium Intake Goal

In order to reduce my sodium intake, I will:

_____ for the next _____ days.

I will reach my goal by (doing what?): _____

HEALTHY EATING OVERVIEW

SODIUM

This section will explain why it is important to look at how much sodium is in the foods we consume.

KEY MESSAGES

- Sodium is a mineral found in salt.
- All types of salt are high in sodium.
- Most of us eat too much sodium; more than double the amount we need. Healthy children only need 1000-1500 mg of sodium per day; healthy adults only need 1500 mg of sodium per day.
- Food labels can help you make healthy food choices.
- Over 75% of sodium we eat comes from processed foods such as cheese, deli meats, pizza, sauces and soups.
- Pre-packaged foods, ready-to-eat foods, fast foods, and restaurant meals are often high in sodium

Reference: Healthy Families BC (<https://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/articles/topic/sodium>)

Why Sodium?

When children consume too much sodium, they develop a preference for high sodium foods, which results in less healthy choices throughout their life. Teaching children about salt or sodium and creating an environment where lower salt choices are readily available supports their health and learning. Sodium is found in salt (sodium chloride) and other products like baking soda (sodium bicarbonate), monosodium glutamate (MSG), and sodium nitrite/nitrate, which is used for curing meat. It is the sodium in salt which can be harmful to our health.

The *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in B.C. Schools* include sodium as one of the criteria for classifying foods into groups that determine whether the food or beverages can be sold to students in public schools.

Eating too much sodium can be harmful to your health.

Adapted from: Sodium 101 (<http://www.sodium101.ca>)

Recommended Resources

- Healthy Families BC (www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/articles/topic/sodium)
- Sodium 101 (www.sodium101.ca)
- Dietitians of Canada – Sodium Sense (<http://www.dietitians.ca/Your-Health/Nutrition-A-Z/Blood-Pressure/Sodium-Sense-factsheets.aspx>)

