

# Success

## *with Heart Failure*

### 3 KEY STEPS



VOLUME NO. 2

CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE OUTREACH PROGRAM OF EDUCATION (COPE) NEWSLETTER

## Low Salt Diet

**The 3 Key Steps to Success with Heart Failure are:** 1) avoid salt; 2) weigh yourself daily; and 3) take your medication.

In this newsletter we will focus on the first key step...avoiding salt in your diet. We will also talk about what you should be eating and some tips to help you follow your new way of eating!

### Healthy eating keeps you feeling well

A low sodium (salt) diet can help you feel better and allow your heart failure medicines to work better. It may even keep you out of the hospital. It is important to make sure that you eat well despite being on a low sodium diet. You need to eat enough calories, protein, vitamins and minerals to prevent loss of your muscle mass. Follow Canada's food Guide to Healthy Eating to ensure a variety of foods in your diet (*included in this newsletter*).

### What is sodium?

Sodium and chloride are the compounds that make up salt. Today, salt's major use is flavouring and as a preservative. Your body needs some sodium to help maintain a proper water balance. But, with heart failure, you need to limit the amount of sodium you eat.

### Why should I limit the amount of salt or sodium in my diet?

Salt acts like a sponge and retains fluid. The extra fluid makes it harder for your heart to work. Extra fluid can also cause symptoms like swelling of the ankles, feet or abdomen, shortness of breath or weight gain. One of the main reasons people have to be hospitalized for heart failure is that they had too much sodium in their diet.

### How much sodium can I have?

The typical Canadian diet is very high in sodium. Even if you do not add salt while cooking or at the table, you still may be eating too much sodium. We tend to eat processed foods, like frozen dinners, boxed noodle and rice dishes, and canned soups which are high in sodium.

- The usual limit of sodium suggested for people with moderate to severe heart failure or with high blood pressure is 2 grams (2000 mg) per day.

### How will I stick to my sodium limit?

- Take the salt shaker off the table. Did you know that 1 tsp. salt is about 2300 mg sodium?
- Cook without salt.
- Choose foods that are lower in sodium.
- Limit canned or processed foods.
- Read food labels.

### Take the salt shaker off the table

- Sprinkle fresh lemon juice over vegetables and salads.
- Replace your salt shaker with a mixture of sodium free herbs, spices and pepper.
- Check with your doctor first before using salt substitutes.

### Cook without Salt

- Try using low or no salt herbs, spices and seasonings.
- Season or marinate meats, poultry, fish with onions, garlic, lemon, herbs and spices before cooking to bring out the flavor.
- Consider buying a low salt cookbook! Always look for one that lists how much sodium is in each recipe.

Here is a list of herbs, spices, and condiments that are either low or high in sodium:

## LOW SALT

allspice, basil, bay leaves, black pepper, cayenne pepper, celery powder, chives, cinnamon, cloves, cocoa powder, cumin, curry, dill, extracts (e.g., vanilla, almond, lemon), garlic (fresh & powder), ginger, honey, lemon, maple syrup, mustard (powder), nutmeg,

## HIGH SALT

barbecue sauce, celery salt, cocktail sauce, fish sauce, garlic salt, horseradish, ketchup, kosher salt, lite salt, meat tenderizer, MSG, mustard, onion salt, plum sauce, relish, salt, sea salt, seasoning salt, soy sauce (even lite), steak sauces, stir fry mixes, taco seasoning, teriyaki sauce, worcestershire sauce

- Skim or 1 % milk
- Soy milk
- Yogurt
- Low sodium cottage cheese
- Cheeses lower in sodium: cream cheese, soft goat cheese, gruyere, mozzarella, ricotta, swiss emmentaler (*Remember to choose no more than 1 oz of cheese per day!*)

### Meats and Alternates (2-3 servings/day)

- Unsalted canned fish or rinse regular canned fish
- Fresh or frozen meats, poultry, fish, seafood
- Unsalted nuts or seeds
- Eggs (2-3 per week max)

### Reading Labels

As a rule, most processed foods are high in sodium. But, not all processed foods are high in sodium. The only way to know for sure is to read the food label.

Nutrition Facts			
Per 1/2 cup (125 mL)			
Amount	% Daily Value		
<b>Calories</b> 70			
<b>Fat</b> 0 g			<b>0 %</b>
Saturated 0 g			<b>0 %</b>
+ Trans 0 g			
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0 mg			
<b>Sodium</b> 5 mg			<b>0 %</b>
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 17 g			<b>6 %</b>
Fibre 3 g			<b>12 %</b>
Sugars 14 g			
<b>Protein</b> 0 g			
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 4 %		
Calcium 0 %	Iron 4 %		

### Choose foods that are lower in sodium

Here are some low sodium food choices in the different food groups of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. Generally, you can eat as much fresh food as you want without counting the sodium content...so THINK FRESH!

#### Grains (5-12 servings/day)

- Whole grain breads
- Hot cereals, cereals low in sodium
- Rice, pasta
- Couscous, bulgur, barley
- Dried beans, peas, lentils
- Unsalted crackers or lower in sodium (*check label!*)

#### Fruits and Vegetables (5-10 servings/day)

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Plain frozen fruits and vegetables
- Canned fruit
- Fruit juices

#### Dairy Products (2-4 servings/day)

- Ingredient List: ingredients are listed in order of quantity from the most to the least.
- Look for words: salt, sodium, soda, MSG (monosodium glutamate) which should not be near the beginning of the list.
- "Sodium Free" means < 5 mg
- Try not to pick a main food item/entrée with more than 500 mg of sodium

The Nutrition Facts label will now be listing the amount of sodium in milligrams (mg).

Review the serving size and sodium content information. If you eat the same amount as the serving size...then you are eating that amount of sodium. If you normally eat more than that, then you will also be eating more sodium.

## LIMIT FLUIDS

### FRUSTRATED WITH ALL OF THESE DIETARY CHANGES?

- Remember to make changes slowly instead of all at once.
- Eat more of the low sodium foods you like...so it doesn't seem like you are changing your diet completely.
- Keep track of what you eat so you can be aware of how much sodium you are eating.
- Post a list of low sodium foods on the fridge....so you know what you can have more of!

### Why do I have to restrict the amount of fluid I consume?

When you have heart failure, your body will retain fluid, but by drinking less, you can reduce the amount of fluid it retains.

### How do I know I am retaining fluid?

One of the first signs of fluid retention is weight gain. By weighing yourself every day, you will be able to detect if you have gained any fluid. Call your doctor if you notice a weight gain of 2 lbs in 2 days or 5 lbs in one week.

### How much fluid should I take in a day?

Your doctor will tell you how much fluid you should limit yourself to. Usually, the limit is set to 4-6 cups of fluid each day. Spread out your fluid intake over the day.

### What is considered a fluid?

Any food that is liquid at room temperature is considered to be a fluid. This includes, jello, ice cream, sherbet, water, ice chips, tea, coffee, milk,

## Remember your Study Diary!

When your study coordinator calls you in a few months, you will be asked if you needed treatment in the Emergency Room or were admitted to hospital. To help you remember these events please record them in your Patient Diary. Thank you for your assistance with this program.

## Heartwise Advice

### Get Organized

Anybody who takes medication daily has wondered at one time or another: "Did I take my medication today?" A daily or weekly medication container will let you know. An empty slot means you took your medication for that time of day. A full slot means you did not. These medication containers are designed to help you organize your pills and schedule the time to take them.

### Straight From the Heart



My heart problems began in 1971 when I was told that I would need heart surgery because of a valve that did not function properly. But there is a chance it all started much earlier when I had rheumatic fever as a child, living in Poland. In 1973 I finally had heart surgery but whatever repair was done to the valve, did not last. In 1975 I was back in the operating room, having an artificial valve implanted. I was prescribed medication and instructed to make monthly visits to the doctor and the laboratory.

Since that year, I have not had a full-time job. Instead, I helped my husband with his farming to the best of my ability. Babysitting and volunteering at church also kept me occupied. Then in 1990, I started having problems with my heart beating too quickly so I was given additional medication to slow it down. To keep close watch over my condition, the doctor suggested that I attend the Heart Function Clinic that was being set up at the University of Alberta Hospital.

Currently at the age of 64, I am on 6 and occasionally 7 medications. Out of necessity, I have made some lifestyle changes too. I do not use salt. I am careful about the amount of food I eat. I eat lots of fruit and vegetables. My fluid intake is restricted to 4 cups a day – no coffee. I weigh myself every morning and keep a record. For exercise, I walk a block a day. I used to be able to walk more but since I developed varicose veins, walking for longer periods of time is painful. When my caring husband passed away from cancer in 1996, I moved from the farm to a Seniors' Condominium where I am surrounded by friends, many of whom have conditions much worse than my own. My husband and I never had children so my friends are my support and I theirs.

Do I feel frustrated or upset that I have heart failure? Naturally I do. But through the years, it has become part of me – second nature. What will I do when it gets worse and the medical profession cannot help any more? My faith and prayer will help me bear the discomfort. In the meantime, each day is a gift to be thankful for and an opportunity to create new memories as well as to reflect on the good old times.



### Low Sodium Vegetable Beef Soup

¼ lb	lean ground beef	125g
3	green onions, chopped	3
¼ cup	celery, chopped	50 ml
2	carrots, chopped	2
½ cup	cabbage, shredded	125 ml
½ cup	green beans, chopped	125 ml
½ cup	frozen corn	125 ml
1 cup	tomato puree, no salt added	250 ml
3 cups	water	750 ml
½ tsp	tabasco sauce	2 ml
½ tsp	basil	2 ml
¼ tsp	freshly ground pepper	1 ml
½ cup	egg noodles	125 ml

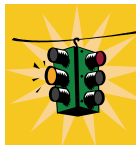
Saute meat and onion for 10 minutes. Add all other ingredients. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 1 hour. Makes 6 servings.

Approximately 43 mg of sodium, 98 calories, 6 g of protein, 13 g of carbohydrate, 3 g of fat per 1 cup (250 ml) serving.

#### Variations:

- ✓ Substitute beans and corn with 1 cup (250 ml) cabbage.
- ✓ Substitute tomato puree with ½ cup (125 ml) tomato paste (no added salt) and ½ cup (125 ml) water.

# From “Low Sodium Savvy” by



## Caution: SALT AHEAD!

We listed the foods that you should choose according to Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating earlier. Here is a list of some of the foods that are high in sodium (salt) that you need to watch out for:

### Grains

- Instant hot cereals, noodle soups, chow mein noodles
- Packaged mixes: pancake, waffle, biscuit, pie crusts
- Salted party snacks: pretzels, chips, crackers

### Fruits and Vegetables

- Canned vegetables
- Brine cured vegetables: pickles, sauerkraut
- Canned vegetable juices: tomato, clamato, V8
- Commercial potato mixes

### Dairy Products

- Cheese spreads (processed)
- Regular cottage cheese
- CHEESE! ( Especially blue cheese, feta, parmesan, processed swiss, romano, roquefort, camembert, edam, gouda, limburger, provolone, havarti)

### Meat and Alternates

- Canned fish, beans, meats
- Salted, dried, pickled or smoked meats
- Bacon, sausage, wieners, anchovies
- Luncheon meat, canned corned beef
- Processed deli meats
- Salted nuts and seeds
- Commercially battered/ breaded frozen fish
- Imitation crab meat

### Other

- Canned soups
- Regular commercial soups & soup bases
- Bouillion cubes
- Instant soups like “Cup a soup”

## 3 Key Steps to Success SUMMARY

1. Avoid salt
2. Weigh yourself daily
3. Take your medication

By following these three key steps, you can help yourself to a healthier life.