

Achieve

A Newsletter
for AvMed
Members

▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH HEART FAILURE

Are salt substitutes safe?

If you're looking for ways to cut back on your sodium intake, you may have found salt substitutes on the grocery shelf. These products look just like salt shakers but promise zero sodium. Is it too good to be true?

Regular table salt is made of sodium chloride. It's the sodium part that can cause problems like fluid retention and high blood pressure. Salt substitutes are made of potassium chloride, making them sodium-free. But they'll give you a hefty dose of potassium instead. "This can be troublesome for those with kidney disease who might have elevated



blood levels of potassium," says Courtney Dorchak, R.D., founder of The Keys to Nutrition in Key Largo, Florida. Certain blood pressure medications, such as ACE inhibitors, can

also raise blood levels of potassium, she points out.

Bottom line: You'll want to talk to your doctor about whether salt subs are safe for you.

Can't use salt subs or don't enjoy the taste?

Try one of these tips to cut back on salt in your cooking:

- 1. Amp up flavor with herbs and spices.**
- 2. Add some heat** with hot sauce, chili flakes, or fresh chili peppers. Ginger and garlic are flavorful additions that add a different kind of heat.
- 3. Experiment with umami** for serious savoriness with less sodium. Get it from mushrooms, aged cheeses, tomato paste, seaweed, and more.
- 4. Always taste before adding salt.**

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How (and why) to exercise safely with CHF

Staying active is a positive feedback loop: The more active you are, the easier it will be to stay active. This means you'll be able to keep doing the things you love. Research shows that regular activity can even prevent complications and hospitalizations.

Before you jump into a new exercise routine, check in with your care team. They'll help you come up with a plan that is safe and doable for you. Pick any activity you enjoy and start slow. Walking is a great place to start. It doesn't require any equipment, and you can do it indoors or outdoors.

Other activities could include swimming, biking, gardening, bowling, on-line yoga — anything that keeps you moving.

As you get started, be patient and don't push yourself too hard. You should be able to carry a conversation while working out. If you can't, slow down. Over time, you'll find you can up the intensity.

Case Manager Spotlight

Vicki Calvert has been with AvMed for 4 years and has been a nurse for 31 years.

What do you love about your job?

"Being able to support people as they make lifestyle changes to promote health. I also enjoy getting to know them and sharing a laugh."



If you notice any of these symptoms, slow down, then stop and rest:

- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Pain or tightness in your chest, or pain in your arms, shoulders, neck, or jaw
- Irregular heartbeat
- Extreme fatigue or tiredness
- Severe sweating
- Nausea or vomiting

If chest pain or other symptoms do not improve with rest, call 911.

Always warm up before and cool down after. This allows your body to ease into activity. An easy way to warm up and cool down is to do the exercise at a slow pace for the first and last few minutes. Ask your doctor if you should include stretches in your warm-up and cool-down too.



Healthy Eating Made Simple

Elizabeth Ferrer, R.D., AvMed's Registered Dietitian, shares her favorite tips for happier, healthier meals — without feeling deprived.

How to stick with your healthy habits for good

The new year brings new motivation to make healthy changes. But resolutions are almost always easier said than done. Set yourself up for success by setting goals with these criteria in mind:

1. GET SPECIFIC

You need to know exactly what to do. Losing weight is a common goal, but it's not specific enough. Ask yourself: What can I do daily to work toward weight loss?

2. MAKE IT MEASURABLE

Add numbers to your goal, such as: Eat at least 2 servings of vegetables every day; drink 3 sodas a week instead of 1 a day; do yoga 2 times each week.

The more specific you are, the better you'll be able to measure your success.



3. BE REALISTIC

Come up with goals you feel you can actually accomplish. For example, cutting cream and sugar out of your coffee is not realistic if you hate black coffee (consider low-fat or sugar free alternatives). If your provider is helping you set goals, speak up if you think their suggestions will not work for you.

4. SET A TIME FRAME

Make a deadline and assess your progress at that time. If it's not going as planned, now is your chance to adjust. Think about why it's not working. Maybe you're struggling to eat more vegetables because you don't know enough ways to prepare them? Set a new goal to try a new vegetable recipe each week.

Finally, don't try to do everything all at once. Three goals is a good place to start. And not every goal has to be a change — you can set a goal to keep up a healthy habit you're already doing.

Remember: Celebrate your wins, learn from your losses, but never give up!

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Recipe



Foil-Pack Mediterranean Salmon

Serves 4 | Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

1 pint cherry tomatoes	1 lemon, juiced
8 oz broccolini, ends trimmed	1 Tbsp olive oil
8 oz small red potatoes	1 Tbsp salt-free Mediterranean spice blend
1 (14-oz) can white beans, rinsed and drained	4 (5-oz) center-cut salmon fillets

Nutrition facts (per serving):

Calories 590 | Fat 24g (Sat Fat 5g) | Chol 95mg | Sodium 481mg |
Carbs 36g | Fiber 12g | Sugar 4g (inc. 0g Added Sugar) | Protein 42g
| Vit D 20µg | Calcium 150mg | Iron 5mg | Potassium 1,600mg

Directions

Preheat oven to 400°F. Tear 4 sheets of foil, about 12" x 15" each. Divide the veggies and beans evenly in the center of each foil sheet.

Mix together the oil, lemon juice and spice blend. Drizzle about ½ Tbsp over each veggie pile.

Set a piece of salmon on top of each, and drizzle with the remaining oil mix. Fold up the sides of the foil and crimp together, forming a pouch.

Place pouches on a baking sheet, and bake until fish and veggies are cooked through, 15 to 20 minutes.