

# Heart Failure Nutrition Therapy

Client Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dietitian / Dietetic Technician \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Why Was Nutrition Therapy Prescribed?

This low-sodium nutrition therapy can help you feel better and prevent future heart problems. Limiting the amount of sodium that you eat and drink helps prevent and control the build-up of fluids around the heart or in your legs. Too much fluid makes your heart work harder. This may make your blood pressure too high. Your doctor may also limit how much fluid you eat and drink to create a more normal level of sodium in your blood.

## Sodium Limits

The nutrition plan for heart failure usually limits the sodium that you get from food and drink to 2,000 milligrams (mg) per day. Salt is the main source of sodium in food.

The Nutrition Facts on a food label lists the amount of sodium in one serving of the food in the package:

- It is good to select foods with no more than 140 mg per serving.
- Foods with more than 300 mg sodium per serving may not fit into a reduced-sodium meal plan.
- Remember to check serving sizes on the label. If you eat more than one serving, you will get more sodium than the amount listed.

Use caution when you eat outside of your home. Restaurant foods can be high in sodium, and you cannot always get information about this.

## Weight Monitoring

Your doctor may tell you to weigh daily. This will help you learn how well your diet and medications are working to keep you from retaining extra fluid.

- If you are overweight, be careful not to overeat. Sticking to your calorie goals is especially important after heart failure because your physical activity may be limited more than usual. If you eat more calories than your body burns, you will gain weight.
- If you are thin, take care to eat enough calories to maintain your weight.



*This handout may be duplicated for client education.*

## Recommended Foods

Remember: Most foods should have less than 300 mg sodium per serving.

<b>Food Group</b>	<b>Recommended Foods</b>
Grains	Most breads, as long as they are not topped with salt (Note: yeast breads are better for you than those made with baking soda.) Many cold cereals, especially shredded wheat and puffed rice or wheat Cooked cereals, pastas, rice, and other starches made without salt or with very little salt
Vegetables	Fresh and frozen vegetables without added sauces, salt, or sodium Homemade soups (salt-free or low-sodium) Low-sodium or sodium-free canned vegetables and soups
Fruits	Fresh and canned fruits
Milk	Nonfat (skim) or 1% fat milk Nonfat milk powder Nonfat or low-fat yogurt Small amounts of low-fat natural cheese (not processed cheeses or cheese products)
Meat and Other Protein Foods	Fresh and frozen meats and fish Low-sodium canned tuna Dried beans and peas Edamame (fresh soybeans) Eggs, especially egg whites
Desserts and Snacks	Fruit Baked goods made without baking soda Angel food cake Fruit crisps Unsalted pretzels, popcorn, or nuts Low-fat pudding
Fats	Tub or liquid margarine Unsaturated fat oils (canola, olive, corn, sunflower, safflower, peanut)
Condiments	Fresh or dried herbs Spices Vinegar Lemon or lime juice Pepper sauce Salt-free seasoning mixes Simple salad dressings (such as vinegar and oil)

## Foods Not Recommended

Remember: Most foods should have less than 300 mg sodium per serving.

<b>Food Group</b>	<b>Not Recommended</b>
Grains	Breads or crackers topped with salt Cereals (hot or cold) with more than 300 mg sodium per serving Biscuits, cornbread, and other “quick” breads prepared with baking soda Bread crumbs or stuffing mix from a store (homemade can be okay if from a low-sodium recipe)
Vegetables	Canned vegetables (unless they are salt-free) Frozen vegetables with sauces Sauerkraut and pickled vegetables Canned or dried soups (unless they are low-sodium or salt-free) French fries and onion rings
Fruits	Dried fruits preserved with sodium-containing additives
Milk	Buttermilk Processed cheese and cheese foods (natural cheese should be eaten only in small amounts)
Meat	Cured or smoked meats (bacon, ham, sausage) Canned meats (chili, deviled ham, vienna sausage, sardines, soups) Canned or smoked fish High-sodium frozen meals
Desserts and Snacks	Baked goods made with baking soda Salted snacks, such as nuts, chips, or pretzels
Fats	Salted butter or margarine
Condiments	Salt, sea salt, garlic salt Seasoning mixes containing salt Bouillon cubes Catsup Barbeque sauce Worcestershire sauce Soy sauce Miso Salsa Pickles, olives, relish
Alcohol	Check with your doctor. Generally, do not have more than one drink per day (1 drink = 5 ounces wine, 12 ounces beer, or 1½ ounces liquor)

## Sample 1-Day Menu

<b>Breakfast</b>	1 cup regular oatmeal 8 ounces 1%-fat milk 1 medium banana 1 slice whole wheat bread with 1 teaspoon soft margarine
<b>Lunch</b>	Fruit plate with ½ cup fresh strawberries, ½ orange (sliced), two peach halves ¾ cup low-sodium cottage cheese 5 unsalted crackers
<b>Evening Meal</b>	3 ounces herb baked fish 1 baked potato with 2 teaspoons soft margarine Sliced tomatoes ½ cup steamed spinach drizzled with lemon juice Baked apple
<b>Snacks</b>	1 cup low-fat pudding ½ low-sodium turkey sandwich on whole wheat bread 2 tablespoons salt-free peanut butter with 5 low-sodium whole grain crackers

Beverages may be included with meals. If your doctor has limited your fluid intake, all the fluids you drink must be within the amount allowed for the day.