Greenwich Hospital

LOW SODIUM DIET

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What is a low sodium diet?

When your doctor orders a low sodium diet for you, it means that you must limit the amount of sodium or salt in the foods you eat to 2 grams (or 2000 milligrams) per day. The sodium content in foods is listed on the food labels of packaged foods. In general, a low sodium diet includes fresh foods, which are naturally low in sodium. These include fresh fruits and vegetables, fresh meat, fish and poultry, potatoes, rice and pasta. Be careful not to add salt while cooking or at the table.

What foods do I need to avoid on a low sodium diet?

Foods you need to avoid to minimize the sodium in your diet are listed below.

Table Salt	Eliminate from cooking and the salt shaker	
Condiments	Pickles, relish, mustard and olives	
Canned foods	Soups, meats and vegetables	
Prepared packaged foods	 Macaroni and cheese, rice or noodle mixes (i.e. Rice-A-Roni) 	
Deli meats	 Bologna, ham, salami, liverwurst, and cheeses 	
Snack foods	 Potato chips, and salted pretzels, nuts, nuts, tortilla chips and crackers 	

What are some alternatives to high-sodium foods?

Read package labels carefully. Products labeled "low sodium" may be lower in sodium than similar products, but still contain a large amount of sodium. Below is a list of foods to choose from to reduce your sodium intake. For labeled items, check the Percent Daily Value for sodium. Try to select foods that provide 5 percent sodium or less per serving.

Avoid:	Choose to eat:	
Smoked, cured, salted, and canned meat, fish and poultry	 Unsalted fresh or frozen beef, lamb, pork, fish, and poultry 	
Regular hard and processed cheese, regular peanut butter	 Low-sodium cheese, low-sodium peanut butter 	
Crackers with salted tops	Unsalted crackers	
Regular canned and dehydrated soups, broths and bouillons	 Low-sodium canned soups, broths and bouillons 	
Regular canned vegetables	 Fresh and frozen vegetables and low-sodium canned vegetables 	
Salted snack foods	 Unsalted tortilla chips, pretzels, potato chips, and popcorn 	

How can I get more information?

It is often difficult to plan a meal by yourself, especially if your diet has recently been changed. If you have questions about your diet, please call to contact a Greenwich Hospital Registered Dietitian or one of the following resources:

Organization	Phone		
Greenwich Hospital Food and Nutrition Services	203.863.5211		
American Dietetic Association	800.877.1600		
Web Resources			
□ American Dietetic Association www.eatright.org			
□ United States Food and Drug Administration: http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/foodlab.html .			

For more Patient Education Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at www.greenhosp.org and click on Patient Services, then Patient Education.