Spice it Up!

“Low-sodium” (low salt) does not have to mean “low flavor.” Here are some tips for flavorful, low-sodium cooking.

Foods that are high in salt include:
- Packaged or processed foods
- Canned foods (soups, meats, vegetables)
- Frozen meals
- Processed meats (lunch meat, sausage, salami)
- Smoked meats (bacon, pastrami, beef jerky)
- Packaged seasoning mixes and seasoning salts, including garlic salt, celery salt, and lemon pepper
- Prepared sauces (spaghetti sauce, enchilada sauce, marsala sauce, etc.)

Aim for less than:
- 400 mg sodium per meal
- 150 mg sodium per snack

Low-Salt Cooking Tips:
- Avoid adding salt to foods—use fresh or dried herbs and spices (see back for ideas) or salt-free seasonings like Mrs. Dash instead.
- Choose fresh or minimally processed ingredients.
- Marinate lean meats, poultry, or fish in pineapple or orange juice for extra flavor.
- Add lemon or orange juice or zest (grated peel) to vegetable stir-fries or lean meat, fish, or poultry.
- Grill chicken or fish topped with thinly sliced lemons or other citrus fruits.
- Add fresh or dried garlic or onion to soups, casseroles, roasted vegetables or meats.
- Add fresh or dried ginger to vegetables.
- Use low-sodium broths as soup bases and add herbs, spices, onion or garlic for flavor.
- Use cayenne pepper, chili powder, or red pepper flakes to add bold, spicy flavor to vegetables, soups, or meat, poultry, and fish.
- Add a piece of onion, garlic, celery, lemon zest, lemon juice, vinegar, or peppercorns to water when steaming or poaching fish, chicken, or vegetables.
- Rub uncooked meat and poultry with garlic and other spices to season it. Refrigerate the seasoned meat for 1-2 hours before cooking it to bring out the flavors.
- Rub chicken with lemon juice, herbs, and a small amount of oil before broiling or roasting.
**Food, Herb, & Spice Pairings:**

**Beef** – basil, bay leaf, caraway, curry, dill, dry mustard, garlic, grape jelly, green pepper, mace, marjoram, fresh mushrooms, nutmeg, onion or onion powder, parsley, pepper, rosemary, sage

**Chicken** – basil, cloves, cranberries, mace, fresh mushrooms, nutmeg, oregano, paprika, parsley, pineapple, rosemary, saffron, sage, savory, tarragon, thyme, tomato, turmeric

**Egg** – chervil, curry, dill, dry mustard, garlic or garlic powder, green pepper, fresh mushrooms, nutmeg, onion powder, paprika, parsley, rosemary, tarragon, tomato

**Fish** – basil, bay leaf, chervil, curry, dill, dry mustard, green pepper, lemon juice, marjoram, fresh mushrooms, paprika, pepper, tarragon, tomato, turmeric

**Lamb** – cloves, curry, dill, garlic or garlic powder, mace, mint, mint jelly, onion, oregano, parsley, pineapple, rosemary, tarragon, thyme

**Pork** – applesauce, basil, caraway, chives, cloves, garlic or garlic powder, onion or onion powder, rosemary, thyme

**Veal** – apricots, basil, bay leaf, currant jelly, curry, ginger, marjoram, fresh mushrooms, oregano, paprika

**Vegetables** – basil, dill, garlic or garlic powder, ginger, lemon juice, mace, marjoram, nutmeg, onion or onion powder, tarragon, tomato, salt-free seasonings, vinegar

**Desserts** – allspice, anise, cinnamon, ginger, mace, nutmeg, vanilla extract, other extracts

**Quick Tip:**

*In general, use a ¼ teaspoon of dried herbs or spices for 4 servings of food.*

**Herb Equivalents:**

1 Tbsp finely cut fresh herbs = 1 tsp dried leafy herbs = ¼-½ tsp ground dried herbs