



Adding a Sodium-Reduction Component to the Energize Your Meetings Program

Jenni Ross, MPH/Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics Student, Nutritional Sciences Program, Department of Epidemiology, University of Washington

Amy Ellings, MPH, and Paj Nandi, MPH, Site Supervisors, Washington State Department of Health

Context: Energize Your Meetings (EYM) is a program created by the Washington State Department of Health designed to provide voluntary guidelines for caterers and meeting-planning staff to provide healthy food options and to encourage physical activity at worksite meetings. The program provides guidelines based on a 5-star rating system, with 5-star choices being the most healthy. This project addresses adding a sodium component to the EYM guidelines.

- Methods:**
- ◆ Research current literature on sodium-reduction efforts, sodium content of common foods, and the newly revised Dietary Guidelines for Americans
 - ◆ Solicit input from caterers and administrative staff by creating and administering an interview tool
 - ◆ Create sodium guidelines with the input of stakeholders and integrate into the 5-star rating system framework
 - ◆ Revise EYM meal suggestions and food and beverage list to include sodium guidelines
 - ◆ Add a key to the recommended food and beverage list explaining the FDA's definitions of "no sodium," "very low sodium," "low sodium," and "reduced sodium"
 - ◆ Create a double-sided education document targeted toward caterers and administrative staff

Results:

- 5-Star Guidelines ★★★★★**
Provide at least one low-sodium option
- ◆ Sodium recommendations for a full meal: no more than 600 mg sodium
 - ◆ Homemade soups, salad dressing, and dips
 - ◆ Roasted or grilled meats and fish instead of deli, salted, cured, or smoked meats and fish
 - ◆ Lower sodium cheese in 1-ounce servings (see Recommended Foods and Beverages)
 - ◆ Breads with 200 mg sodium or less per slice; crackers and other snack foods with less than 150 mg sodium per serving
 - ◆ When serving sandwiches, avoid other high-sodium foods

Sodium Guidelines for Caterers and Meeting Planners

The average American eats too much sodium. Eating too much sodium raises the risk of serious high blood pressure and heart disease and stroke, which are the nation's first and third leading causes of death. More than 100 percent of the sodium we eat is from the food. Reducing 75 percent of this sodium intake from one average food or beverage can reduce the risk of heart disease by as much as 10 percent.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that people consume no more than 2,300 mg of sodium a day, about 1 teaspoon of salt. People with high blood pressure, diabetes, or kidney disease should limit their sodium intake to 1,500 mg a day, about 3/4 teaspoon of salt.

The new sodium guidelines for catering and meeting planners recommend that menus have 600 mg sodium per person per meal, 1/2 teaspoon of salt, or 200 mg sodium per person per snack, 1/4 teaspoon of salt.

Surprisingly Salty

Consume no more than 2300 mg of sodium a day, about one teaspoon of salt.

Key points:
- Choose products with less than 200 mg of sodium per serving.
- Get healthier meals and drinks that avoid these products with 200 mg or more of sodium per serving.
- Bread: Choose a whole grain bread with 100 mg or less sodium per slice.
- Condiments: Choose condiments to portion control containers, and use them liberally.

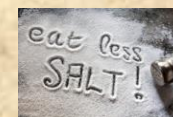
General Tips for Reducing Sodium

- Choose low-sodium products. If you see no options, read labels to find the lowest sodium version.
- Limit sodium from the following categories: processed meats, such as deli meats, hot dogs, and sausage; processed cheese products; soups; salad dressings; and condiments.
- Choose fresh vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.
- Choose low-sodium breads, and limit salt in bread products.
- Limit your sodium intake and sodium from the products you are recommended to consume.
- Use more water instead of salt to season food.

tips for reducing sodium

Caterers:
- Tip for delicious and healthy low-sodium catering:
• When making salad dressings, soups, dips, or condiments use low-sodium versions of all 3 ingredients: oil, vinegar, and salt.
• Use fresh vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.
• Choose low-sodium breads, and limit salt in bread products.
• Choose low-sodium soups, dips, and condiments.
• Use portion control containers for soups, dips, and condiments.
• Use more water instead of salt to season food.

Meeting Planners:
- Tip for choosing low sodium options:
• Choose low-sodium products with no more than 200 mg of sodium per serving.
• Get healthier meals and drinks that avoid these products with 200 mg or more of sodium per serving.
• Bread: Choose a whole grain bread with 100 mg or less sodium per slice.
• Condiments: Choose condiments to portion control containers, and use them liberally.



- Implications:** Excessive sodium consumption contributes to heart disease, hypertension, renal disease, stroke, and other disorders, costing the US health care system more than \$180 million annually.* The need for community, public health, and industry interventions in addition to simply interventions at the individual level is receiving increasing attention. By conducting this project, the Department of Health hopes to take a step toward reduction of this economic and disease burden and to:
- ◆ Stay in step with the sodium reduction emphasis of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the New York City Health Department, the American Heart Association, and the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
 - ◆ Educate caterers, worksites, and administrative staff on healthy food options
 - ◆ Serve as a model for culture change with respect to meetings, worksite wellness, catered events, and procurement policy
 - ◆ If Washington state's buying power is sufficiently robust to change menus statewide, create broader economic influence favoring the procurement and distribution of lower-sodium foods and food products
- * Lloyd-Jones *et al.* (2009). Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics. *Circulation*.

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