

# Making School Meals Healthier – Sugar/Salt/Sodium

## Practices to Reduce Sugar in School Meals

- ✓ Offer low-sugar cereals at breakfast.
- ✓ Purchase fruit in light syrup or natural juice.
- ✓ Offer vanilla wafers, gingersnaps, or graham crackers as cookie choices.
- ✓ Mix sugared and low-sugar cereals.
- ✓ Offer fruit for dessert.
- ✓



Once nutritional needs are met, sugar can be an extra source of calories.

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## Menu Planning Practices To Lower Salt and Sodium

- ✓ Remove salt shakers from cafeteria tables.
- ✓ Limit the use of salty or smoked meats.
- ✓ Where practical, replace canned vegetables with fresh or frozen.
- ✓ Serve fewer items prepared with traditional soy sauce or barbecue sauce.
- ✓ Serve school-made soup more frequently than canned soups.



## Purchasing Practices to Lower Salt and Sodium

- ✓ Limit purchase of canned or dehydrated soups.
- ✓ Read food labels.
- ✓ Purchase as few commercially prepared items as possible.

# Recipe Modification Practices To Lower Salt and Sodium

## Eliminate:

- ✓ The salt called for in recipes.
- ✓ High salt seasonings.
- ✓ Salt from water when cooking pasta, potatoes, or vegetables.

## Reduce:

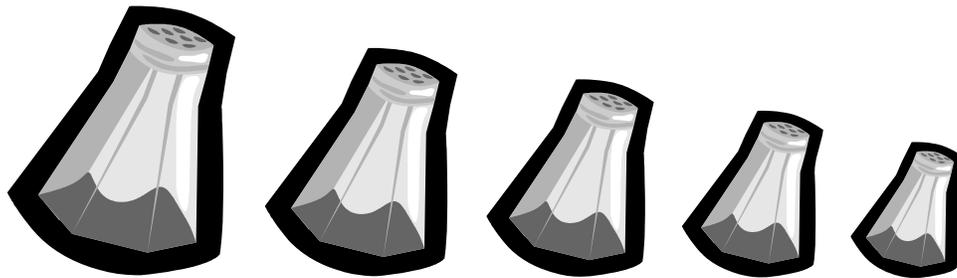
- ✓ The amount of salt in recipes by at least ½.
- ✓ Salt by using lower salt ingredients.

## Substitute:

- ✓ Herbs, spices, garlic powder or onion powder for salt, onion salt, and garlic salt.
- ✓ Sodium-free or reduced-sodium versions of seasonings.

# Food Preparation Practices To Lower Salt and Sodium

- ✓ For bright green color, do not add baking soda during the cooking of vegetables but cook for a shorter period of time. Baking soda contains sodium and it destroys vitamin C.
- ✓ Use tasting panels to determine which herbs and spices are acceptable to students.
- ✓ Make cakes, pancakes, and desserts from scratch instead of using pre-prepared mixes.



Adapted from: A Game Plan for Success in Implementing the Dietary Guidelines, Nutrition Education and Training Program, Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs, North Dakota Dept. Of Public Instruction, Bismarck, ND.