# Dr. Greg's SuperChefs — Cookery for Kids

# The Salty Seesaw

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**S**ODIUM, is found in salt and many of the foods we eat every day. It is important for normal body functions, but too much sodium can lead to health problems. Many people eat 2 times or more sodium than they need. Sodium is found naturally in some foods, or it can be added during cooking and at the table. But, most of the excess sodium we eat is hidden in many common processed foods. In heavily processed foods such as deli meats, granola bars, canned soup, and fast food, the amount of added sodium is often very high. Try to eat less of these foods.

While too much sodium can be bad for our bodies, too little sodium can also be harmful to our mouth by reducing the production of saliva. When the mouth becomes dry and sticky, there is a higher risk of cavities (holes in teeth).
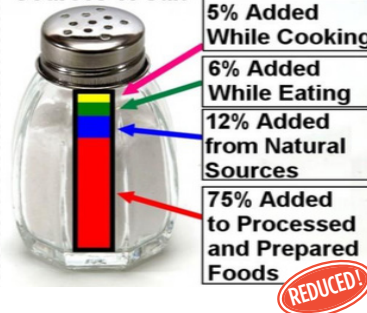
When it comes to sodium, it is important to remember that balance is the key. Like a seesaw, we need to consider that too much sodium is not good for our health, but too little can also be bad for our teeth.

## How do I make my food tasty without adding salt?

✔ Use no-salt spice blends

✔ Try using fresh herbs such as parsley, basil, garlic, onion & ginger

✔ If you like heat, try jalapenos or peppers

✔ Choose low sodium soy sauce and use small amounts

✔ Use balsamic vinegar to make your own salad dressing

**Sources of Salt**

- 5% Added While Cooking
- 6% Added While Eating
- 12% Added from Natural Sources
- 75% Added to Processed and Prepared Foods *REDUCED!*

ANSWERS: **A** (250 MG), **B** (1100 MG), **C** (15 MG), **D** (700 MG), **E** (170 MG) **F** (800 MG)

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# TEST YOUR SALTY SMARTS

## Match the sodium value to the common food items below.

| 250 mg | 15 mg | 1100 mg | 800 mg | 170 mg | 700 mg |
|--------|-------|---------|--------|--------|--------|

A) Muffin   B) Ham Sandwich   C) Brocolli   D) Ketchup   E) 2 slices pizza   F) Ramen noodles

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