



THE MIGRAINE RELIEF PLAN

Sodium, migraines, and Meniere's Disease

- 90% of all Americans will develop hypertension in their lifetimes without diet changes. This is especially concerning because normally our blood pressure lowers with age.
- Americans eat far too much sodium; 80% of the sodium comes from processed foods with added salt.
- People with chronic migraines have double the risk of developing hypertension.
- A high-sodium diet contributes to generalized inflammation through the stimulation of Th17 cells. The white salt found in processed foods and saltshakers, bleached and stripped of minerals, may be a contributor to autoimmune conditions. One research study found that, while sodium levels in the blood may not be elevated, sodium levels within the lymphoid tissues may be, which might be generating the auto-immune response.
- A high-sodium meal itself may trigger headaches.
- We need only a small amount of sodium for our bodies to function properly, estimated to be around 500 mg. per day, which is naturally occurring in the whole foods we eat. We do not need added salt to be healthy.
- Early humans probably got between 400-800 mg. sodium per day in their diets, without any salt available on a daily basis.
- The standard American diet can range from 3000-8000 mg. sodium per day. For example, one Happy Meal contains 810 mg. of sodium. A Quarter-Pounder with cheese and large fries contain 1800 mg. of sodium.
- The American Heart Association now recommends no more than 1500 mg. per day be consumed, no matter what your age.
- My recommendation is between 800-1500 mg. per day, maintaining a consistent average on the lower end if you have Meniere's disease. I have found that 1000 mg. is very doable.
- It takes two months, possibly three, for our palate to get used to low-sodium foods. They do eventually taste good.
- If you eliminate processed foods and salt from your cooking, you can then add a small amount to your food at the table. Choose pink or gray sea salt. Himalayan pink salt contains more than 80 trace minerals, including iron, iodine, copper, zinc, selenium, and molybdenum, all important for people with autoimmune conditions. Five twists of my salt grinder is the equivalent of 100 mg of sodium.
- You may have seen on the Internet that taking a large quantity of salt will instantly "cure" a migraine. I don't recommend that approach nor does any reputable doctor.



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Low-sodium diets can improve:

- Diabetes symptoms
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- PMS symptoms
- Joint issues and joint pain
- Meniere's Disease dizziness and vertigo. It's especially important to maintain a daily average that's consistent, ideally around 1000 mg per day.

For more complete information on sodium, and all the reference articles used, look for my upcoming book *The Migraine Relief Plan*.