



How to Follow a Low Sodium Diet in Hawaii

Nutrition Bulletin | *January 2025*

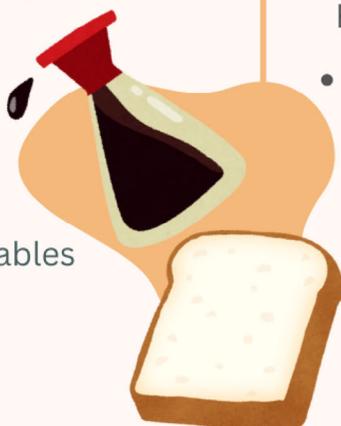
UNDERSTANDING

SODIUM'S ROLE IN THE BODY

Sodium is essential for our bodies - it helps maintain fluid balance, supports nerve function, and plays a role in muscle contractions. However, too much sodium over time puts stress on the heart and blood vessels potentially leading to high blood pressure, heart disease, or stroke.

COMMON SOURCES OF SODIUM IN HAWAII

- **Soy sauce:** used in many Asian dishes
- **Poke:** uses soy sauce and other salty marinades
- **Preserved foods:** pickled vegetables and kimchi
- **Breads, salad dressings, and canned goods**



Being aware of these hidden sources can help you make smarter choices when trying to cut back.

WAYS TO REDUCE SODIUM

- **Gain awareness of sodium intake** by looking at the nutrition labels on the foods you eat regularly.
- **Start gradually** by switching to low-sodium shoyu, using herbs and spices while reducing salt, add a splash of citrus juice, or seasoning rice with furikake instead of shoyu.
- **Cook more at home** as this is one of the best ways to control your sodium intake. Consider meal-prepping if you're short on time. Incorporate salt-free seasonings and various herbs to add flavor without the extra sodium.
- **Reduce high-sodium processed foods** such as canned soups, deli meats, and frozen dinners. If you do choose processed foods, look for low-sodium versions or rinse canned vegetables and beans under water to remove some of the added salt.
- **Choose wisely when eating out** by opting for grilled or steamed dishes over fried or breaded options, and asking for sauces and dressings on the side so you can control how much you use.

DAILY SODIUM INTAKE: WHAT'S THE RIGHT AMOUNT?

The American Heart Association recommends that most adults should limit their sodium intake to no more than 2,300 milligrams per day, with an ideal limit of around 1,500 milligrams for those with high blood pressure. But by paying attention to labels and portion sizes, you can monitor your intake.



Questions?

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SUPPORT YOUR LIVER HEALTH WITH NUTRITION

Nutrition | February 2025



This month, I'd like to shine a spotlight on liver health. In the United States, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) has been increasing and now affects over 30% of the population. Without routine blood screening, it can be difficult to know if you have this condition. It is more common in people who have diabetes and high cholesterol, however it can happen to anyone. If left unmanaged, this silent condition can lead to serious health issues like liver inflammation and permanent scarring. If you or someone you know has been diagnosed, these nutrition tips can help reverse the condition.

Foods to Include for a Healthier Liver

Incorporating the right foods into your diet can support liver health and help reduce excess fat in the liver. Some liver-friendly options include:

- **Leafy Greens:** Kale, spinach, and watercress contain lutein, zeaxanthin, and carotene to support detoxification.
- **Cruciferous Vegetables** like broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts and cabbage increase the production of indole-3-carbinol which has been shown to reduce inflammation in the liver and support detoxification.
- **Fruits:** Citrus fruits, papaya, berries and pineapple are rich in antioxidants and vitamin C to support liver health.
- **Fatty Fish:** Mahi-mahi, ahi, mackerel or salmon provide omega-3 fatty acids, which reduce liver inflammation.
- **Nuts and Seeds:** Macadamia nuts, walnuts, almonds and chia seeds provide healthy fats and antioxidants.
- **Olive Oil:** A small amount of olive oil supports healthy fat metabolism. Incorporate this regularly with food such as salad dressings, sautéed vegetables, pasta sauces and low-moderate heat cooking.
- **Coffee & Green Tea** in moderation have been linked to lower liver fat levels likely due to their unique antioxidants.



Foods to Limit or Avoid

These foods can increase liver fat and inflammation. Eat sparingly.

- **Added Sugars:** Found in candies, baked goods, and sugary drinks. Too much added sugar increases fat storage in the liver.
- **High Fructose Corn Syrup:** Highest amounts of fructose are found in sodas, condiments and some candies. Check the ingredient label and limit these products. Primal Kitchen offers low sugar condiments.
- **Refined Carbs:** White bread, pasta, chips and pastries. When consumed in large portions, can increase fat storage in the liver.
- **Saturated and Trans Fats:** Found in fried foods, processed snacks and animal proteins. These increase inflammation in the liver and contribute to insulin resistance which worsens the progression of fatty liver disease. Limit to <18g per day.
- **Excess Alcohol:** Even small amounts can worsen liver function if you already have fatty liver disease.



Hawaii Meals on Wheels Client Bulletin

March 2025

Delivery Hours

- **HOT** meals: 9:30 AM - 2:00 PM, Monday to Friday
- **FROZEN** meals: 9:30 AM - 2:00 PM, Mondays or Tuesdays only

Meal Cancellation Policy

- If you receive **HOT** meals, call us before 12:00 PM one business day prior.
- If you receive **FROZEN** meals, call us before 4:00 PM by Tuesday the week before.

Holiday Delivery Dates

- We will deliver meals on the upcoming holiday:
Prince Kuhio Day - Wednesday, March 26

If you have questions or need to cancel your meal, please call our office at **808-988-6747**.



Save paper!

Get your client bulletin by email.
Send a request to info@hmow.org

Your prompt payments enable us to continue serving nutritious meals. You can now make your monthly payments online at:

<https://hmow.org/?s=private+pay>

Please continue to show Hawaii Meals on Wheels support by asking your friends and family to remember us through the following campaigns.



Aloha United Way (AUW) -
70190



Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) -
48796

Nutrition Tips for Kidney Health

Your kidneys filter waste, maintain fluid balance, and control blood pressure daily. Kidney disease often progresses silently without early symptoms. Fortunately, nutritional strategies exist to protect kidney function and slow decline with age. Here are a few quick tips to keep you and your kidneys healthy!



Stay Hydrated

Drinking sufficient water is essential for kidney health, helping to flush out waste and prevent dehydration. It's particularly important in warmer weather. Consult your doctor or dietitian for personalized hydration recommendations.



Antioxidant-Rich Diet

Plant-based foods are packed with antioxidants that help minimize inflammation in the kidneys and lessen damage when consumed consistently. Some of my top picks for antioxidant-rich foods include black beans, berries, arugula, watercress, avocado, and cabbage, among others.



Limit Sodium

Helps reduce blood pressure. Sodium causes more water to stay in our bloodstream, which may make our blood pressure higher. This can lead to stress on our kidneys and result in damage if not controlled.





Hawaii-Inspired Nutrition Tips for Heart Health

Nutrition Bulletin | June 2025



WHY HEART HEALTH MATTERS

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S., affecting about 1 in 5 people each year. Factors like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and poor eating habits play a big role, but heart disease is mostly preventable.

HEART HEALTHY HAWAIIAN-INSPIRED FOODS

Hawaii's local cuisine supports heart health through:

- **Fresh fish** (ahi, ono, mahi-mahi) are rich in omega-3 fatty acids.
- **Tropical fruits** (papaya, guava) are high in antioxidants and fiber.
- **Leafy greens** (kale, watercress) promote healthy blood vessels.
- **Macadamia nuts and seeds** containing monounsaturated fats help improve cholesterol levels.

FOODS TO LIMIT OR AVOID

While many Hawaiian ingredients are heart-healthy, some should be consumed in moderation:

- **Fried and processed foods** (fried chicken, spam) are high in unhealthy fats; choose grilled or baked options.
- **Sugary treats** (malasadas, shave ice) are high in added sugars; limit intake and prefer natural sweeteners like fresh fruit.
- **High sodium dishes** (shoyu or oyster sauce) can increase blood pressure; opt for low-sodium alternatives or use citrus and spices for flavor.

LIFESTYLE TIPS FOR A HEALTHY HEART

To maintain heart health beyond diet, consider these lifestyle changes:

Stay Active!

Engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise weekly to lower blood pressure and improve circulation.

Manage Stress!

Practice mindfulness techniques like meditation, yoga, or traditional Hawaiian methods such as ho'oponopono.

Stay Hydrated!

Drink water to support blood flow and body function, especially in warm climates.

Limit Alcohol!

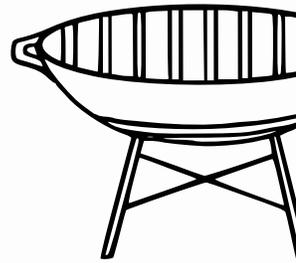
Opt for mocktails with fresh fruit and sparkling water as a healthier alternative.

Making consistent, thoughtful choices with fresh, local ingredients can keep your heart strong and healthy for years!



TIPS ON ENJOYING GRILLING SEASON

Nutrition Corner August 2025



Stay Saucy

Sides and sauces can quickly add to your sugar and sodium intake. Some ways to lighten your plate are:

- Make a DIY huli huli marinade using fresh pineapple juice, low-sodium soy sauce or coconut aminos, ginger, garlic, and a touch of honey
- Skip the heavy mayo-based sides and offer alternatives like a yogurt-based slaw or grilled corn with chili-lime butter
- Opt for whole food-based condiments like guacamole or salsa instead of sugary BBQ sauce

Recipe alternatives

- Grilled Veggie skewers with a side of tahini dip or hummus
- Brown Rice Salad with edamame, cucumber, sesame and soy
- Watermelon and Cucumber Salad with mint and drizzle of honey
- Rainbow Pasta Salad with whole grain noodles, olives, cherry tomatoes, and a lemony dressing

Grilling and Health - TMAO's

Grilling meals over high heat or open flame can create compounds like TMAO (trimethylamine N-oxide) which some studies have linked to increased inflammation and chronic disease risk.

Here's some things you can do which may reduce harmful compounds from forming:

- Marinate meats with vinegar, lemon, or other acids which may reduce harmful compounds from forming
- Use Indirect heat or wrap foods in foil to minimize charring
- Avoid overcooking or blackening meats. Aim for a golden-brown finish instead





HOW TO STAY HYDRATED IN HAWAII'S HEAT

Nutrition Bulletin | July 2025

WHY HYDRATION MATTERS

In Hawaii's warm climate, staying hydrated is vital for health. It's important to regularly assess our hydration habits, as activities like beach outings and hiking can raise dehydration risks.

By staying mindful of your hydration needs and adjusting your habits to the warm Hawaiian climate, you can support your overall health and well-being.

WHAT COUNTS AS FLUIDS?

Hydration extends beyond plain water; various beverages and foods contribute to fluid intake.

Key sources include:

- **Coconut Water:** High in electrolytes like potassium.
- **Herbal Teas:** Hydrating without sugars or caffeine.
- **Infused Water:** Flavored with fruits or herbs.
- **Water-Rich Foods:** Fruits and vegetables such as watermelon and cucumbers.

Caffeinated and alcoholic drinks can contribute to fluid intake but may not be ideal for hydration due to their diuretic effects.

HOW MUCH WATER SHOULD YOU DRINK?

While individual hydration needs vary, a general guideline is to aim for 8-10 glasses of water per day. In hot climates like Hawaii, you may need more to compensate for increased fluid loss through sweat. It's essential to listen to your body and adjust your intake accordingly.

SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION

Be aware of the following signs that may indicate dehydration

- Thirst
- Dry mouth
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Dark yellow urine

If you experience these symptoms, it's important to increase your fluid intake promptly.

HYDRATION TIPS FOR KUPUNA

To stay properly hydrated:

- Drink fluids regularly, not just when thirsty.
- Monitor urine color; aim for pale yellow.
- Carry a reusable water bottle for easy access.
- Avoid direct sun from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Wear light, loose clothing and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Use fans, air conditioning, or misting sprays for cooling.



Foods That Support Learning and Mood

What we eat directly affects our feelings and functioning. The brain needs consistent fuel for alertness, information processing, and emotion regulation.

Mindful changes in meals and snacks can significantly enhance learning, concentration, and coping with daily challenges.



HOW NUTRITION INFLUENCES LEARNING AND MOOD

The brain requires a constant supply of glucose and nutrients for optimal function. Balanced meals stabilize blood sugar levels, resulting in improved attention, fewer mood swings, and more consistent energy.

BALANCED EATING PATTERNS FOR BETTER ENERGY AND ATTENTION

What you eat is important, but timing matters too. Skipping meals or prolonged gaps can cause energy crashes and irritability. Aim to eat every 3 to 4 hours, focusing on meals with protein, fiber, and healthy fats.

LIFESTYLE HABITS THAT SUPPORT FOCUS AND MOOD

Good nutrition is enhanced by other healthy habits, such as:

- Consistent sleep: Aim for 8-10 hours for children and 7-9 hours for adults.
- Regular movement: Outdoor play and walks can reduce stress and improve focus. Encourage screen breaks and family walks.
- Mindful eating: Slow down to enjoy meals and snacks, helping to prevent overeating and increase satisfaction.

SMART SNACKS

Snacks play a vital role in sustaining focus and energy by being simple, satisfying, and nutrient-rich to avoid blood sugar spikes. Here are some brain-friendly snack ideas:

- Greek yogurt with granola and berries
- Trail mix with macadamia nuts and dried mango
- Carrot sticks with hummus
- Mini musubi with brown rice and scrambled egg



HOW MUCH PROTEIN DO YOU REALLY NEED?

Protein is often called the building block of life, and for good reason. It supports everything from growing strong muscles to repairing tissues and producing hormones.

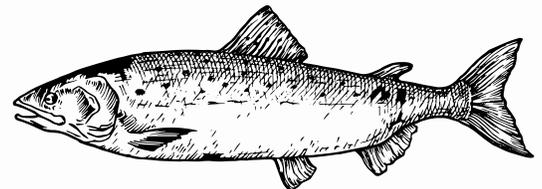


WHY PROTEIN REALLY MATTERS!

As we age, protein becomes even more important. Muscle naturally declines with age, a process known as sarcopenia, but eating enough protein helps slow this loss. It also supports bone health, immune function, and overall independence.

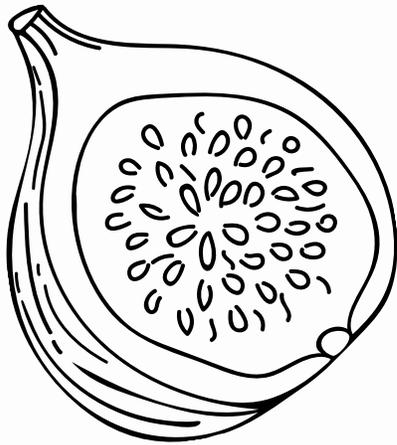
SOME GREAT PROTEIN CHOICES INCLUDE :

- Fish or seafood
- Lean meats, poultry and ground meats
- Greek yogurt or cottage cheese
- Soy foods like tofu or edamame
- Protein powders blended into smoothies (especially helpful for those with a reduced appetite)
- Bone broth for soups



Smart Sugar Swaps

Excessive refined sugar intake is linked with weight gain, blood sugar issues and other metabolic issues. In a nutritionally balanced diet, added sugars should be as low as possible. Sugar substitutes are a way to reduce added sugar while still enjoying sweet flavors.

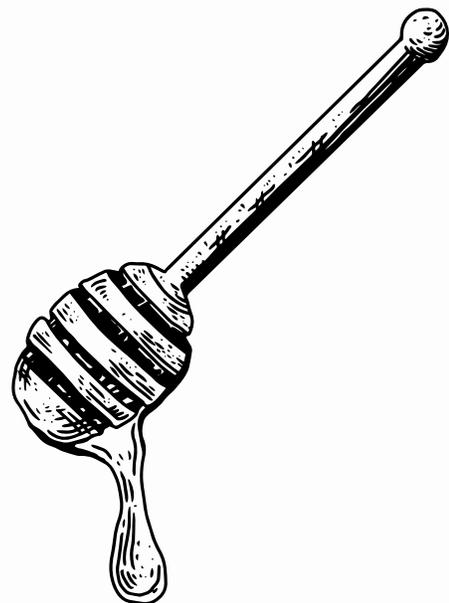


When and Why to Use Sugar Substitues

Replacing high-glycemic sugars with lower-impact alternatives can help reduce glucose and insulin spikes. Lower-calorie sweeteners can also support weight management efforts by helping to reduce overall calorie intake. Beyond health considerations, using different sweeteners can also enhance flavor variety and flexibility in recipes, offering options for those with sensitivities or specific taste preferences.

Health Effects of Sugar Substitutes

Substitutes such as allulose and monk fruit tend to have a minimal impact on blood glucose and insulin levels, making them appealing options for those focusing on blood sugar balance or metabolic health. Some research also suggests that allulose may support weight regulation, fat metabolism, and insulin sensitivity. Tolerance varies from person to person, so gradual introduction is key



Healthy Holiday Eating

The holidays don't have to mean all-or-nothing eating. When you stay mindful and listen to your body, you can fully enjoy your favorite foods without the guilt. It's about intention, not perfection.

Finding Balance

Setting intentional habits can help you feel your best.

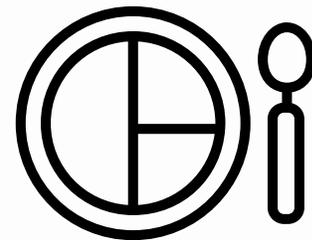
- Walks after dinner can help balance out extra calories and boost your mood.
- Aiming for good, consistent sleep can help decrease stress and cravings.
- Hydrating before meals can help with digestion and helps prevent overeating.



Nutrition

Moderation not deprivation.

Enjoy smaller portions of richer foods. Even a small serving of pie can fit into a balanced plan. Try herbs, garlic or lemon in place of extra salt.



Strategize

Try the plate method!

Filling half of your plate with veggies, one quarter with lean proteins like grilled chicken or fish, and one quarter with whole grains or starches.