**Top tips to reduce salt intake**

Having too much salt (sodium) in your diet increases your blood pressure and is linked to cardiovascular disease and stroke. According to the World Health Organization, around 2.5 million deaths could be prevented each year if global salt consumption were reduced to the recommended level.

**Here are Vitality’s five top tips to reduce salt intake:**

1. Swap out breakfast cereals for rolled oats instead – this has less salt and keeps you feeling full, for longer.
2. Select bread carefully: compare sodium levels per 100g and choose the bread with the lowest in sodium.
3. Reduce processed foods of any kind. Processed meats like ham, bacon, sausages, and cold and roast meat products are very high in salt.
4. Cook food from scratch and choose loads of vegetables, wholegrains like brown rice, barley, or quinoa, healthy protein foods like legumes (beans, chickpeas, and lentils), fresh, skinless poultry and eggs, and fresh or frozen fish or seafood with no marinade or seasoning.
5. Make your own lower-salt broth and stock with fresh vegetables and herbs – soups, and stocks are often made with huge amounts of salt. Rather flavour your food with unsalted fresh or dried herbs and spices, lemon juice, fresh garlic, fresh ginger, fresh chillies and plain, unsweetened yoghurt.

**Some final advice:** even if you never pick up the salt shaker, you might be getting more sodium than you need so keep a close eye on the ready-made meals that you eat.