

# Words on Wellness

Your extension connection to nutrition and fitness

## Shake the Salt!

Sodium recommendations have been revised recently. Americans 51 years and older, African Americans, and those diagnosed with high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease are advised to consume no more than 1,500 milligrams (mg) a day.

The recommended amount for everyone else is 2,300 mg, the amount of sodium in one teaspoon of salt. Currently, the average American consumes 3,400 mg daily. If Americans could achieve the lower sodium recommendation, it is predicted that 92,000 deaths and 66,000 strokes could be prevented every year. In addition, 99,000 Americans would be spared a heart attack and 120,000 would be spared heart disease every year.



Hypertension is a chronic condition resulting from elevated blood pressure. It is referred to as the silent killer because it doesn't have noticeable early warning signs or symptoms.

Below is a table showing the different categories of hypertension. Our goal is to keep our blood pressure below 120/80. We can do this through lifestyle practices and medications.

Category	Systolic Pressure (mmHg) Top Number		Diastolic Pressure (mmHg) Bottom Number
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Prehypertension	120-139	or	80-89
Hypertension	140 or higher	or	90 or higher

Your physician may consider prescribing medication when your blood pressure is "high," at least 140/90. However, it's important to recognize that high blood pressure is a threat to your blood vessels before it crosses that line. Blood pressure higher than 120/80 is associated with increased risk of some types of cardiac events. The area between normal and hypertension is called pre-hypertension and afflicts roughly 1 in 3 Americans; another 1 out of 3 Americans has hypertension.

Researchers aren't sure how elevated blood pressure raises the risk of heart attack and stroke, but one possibility is that it may accelerate the clogging of arteries. The higher blood pressure may lead to damage in the blood vessel walls. The body attempts to correct this damage with plaque.

(continued on back)



## Sauteed Shrimp and Peppers

### Ingredients

- 12 large shrimp
- 1 ½ cups of sweet peppers (red, yellow, or green), sliced
- 1 cup sliced onion
- 3 cloves or 3 teaspoons garlic, minced
- 1 Tablespoon ginger, minced or 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 Tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
- ¼ cup low sodium soy sauce
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper (optional)

In a large pan, add oils and turn to high heat. Add shrimp and saute for 2-3 minutes. Add onions, garlic and ginger. Stir. Add peppers, soy sauce and crushed pepper (if using). Cook until vegetables are crisp tender. Serve with rice pilaf.

### Rice Pilaf

- 1 Tablespoon butter
- ½ cup diced onion
- 1 cup long grain rice
- Zest from one lemon
- 1 ¾ cups water

Melt butter in sauce pan. Saute onions. Add rice and stir to coat. Add zest of one lemon. Add liquid and bring to a boil, then reduce to a low simmer. Cook 15-17 minutes. Turn off heat and let set 5 minutes, fluff and serve.

### Serves 4. Nutrient analysis per serving:

330 calories, 11 gm fat, 3 gm saturated fat, 0 gm trans fat, 50 mg cholesterol, 597 mg sodium, 4 gm fiber



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
University Extension

Healthy People. Environments. Economies.

## Food Safety Tip

Cutting boards are one of the most common kitchen items that can cause cross contamination. A different cutting board should be used for raw meat, poultry, and seafood than is used for preparing ready-to-eat foods like salads and fruits. Produce may not be cooked before serving, so contaminants will not have a “kill step” prior to consumption. Consider purchasing different color cutting boards and designate each color for a particular food. For example, red for meat, yellow for poultry, white for grain products, green for vegetables.



## Shake the Salt! (continued)

### How to begin to adopt the new sodium guidelines?

- Limit meals eaten away from home and buy fewer processed foods.
- Read food labels, watching for words indicating sodium such as: monosodium glutamate, onion salt, garlic salt, seasoned salt, catsup, BBQ sauce, soy sauce, and bouillon. Try low sodium versions of these items.
- Take the salt shaker off the dinner table.
- Add salt free vegetables, beans, or grains to high sodium foods (pre-packaged mixes or restaurant food). This will cut sodium and increase vegetable intake at the same time. For example: Add 1 pound of steamed broccoli to an order of Chinese take-out. Add a pound of carrots and cherry tomatoes to a pre-packaged dish (skillet dinner, rice, or pasta mix). Add 1 cup of brown rice to any quick-cooking, seasoned package of rice.
- Learn about herbs and spices and experiment with new ways to flavor your food.

## Flexibility

Flexibility helps prevent injuries and improve simple motions of everyday life. Being flexible allows for better movement and reduced pain in joints making it easier to perform daily activities. It is important to warm your muscles before stretching. Also, remember to stretch after the cool-down portion of each workout.

- Do not bounce into a stretch or during a stretch. Movements should be slow and steady.
- Mild discomfort while stretching is normal but you should never feel pain. If you do, it means you are stretching too far and you need to reduce the stretch so it does not hurt.
- Always breathe through the stretch, never hold your breath.
- Avoid locking your joints in place during stretches.
- Hold each stretch for 15–30 seconds. Repeat each stretch 2–4 times, trying to extend farther each time.

### Here are two stretches to get you started.

#### *Hamstring Stretch*

Hold on to the back of a chair or countertop and bend forward at the hips, keeping your back and shoulders straight and your knees together. You should feel a stretch in the back of your thighs.

#### *Triceps Stretch*

Lift your arm straight up in the air and bend at the elbow. Gently press the elbow back with the opposite hand. Lift your head and look straight ahead. You should feel a stretch in the back part of the upper arm. Repeat with the other arm.



[www.extension.iastate.edu](http://www.extension.iastate.edu)

PM 2099G April 2011

#### ...and justice for all

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Many materials can be made available in alternative formats for ADA clients. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Gerald A. Miller, interim director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.