

PENNY SAVER NEWS

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The newest edition of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans was just recently announced. Among the recommendations is one that many people (if they were to pay attention to it) would scowl at. It is to eat less salt. How many of us have tried a 'no salt added' this, or a 'low sodium' that, taken a few bites and given up? No flavor! No taste! Those are the common complaints. But our taste for salt is learned, not natural like our preference for sweet things. And if we learned to eat lots of it, couldn't we learn to eat less? Might those high blood pressure readings or daily pressure medications be enough to encourage us to cut back, little by little?

If the visits to the doctors offices, or the numbers on the automatic blood pressure machines in the grocery stores have you thinking about doing something more, read on! Just as we learned gradually to eat salt, cutting down on the salt should be a gradual process. Start by taking the salt shaker off the table. Have someone else in the family hide it. That doesn't mean you can't have it. You just have to go looking for it to get it. While you're looking, think about all the good reasons you have to not use it – kids, grandkids, job, or lower medical costs. When you do find it, think twice and only shake once.

Even if you don't have a salt shaker in the house, that doesn't mean that you're off the hook. The salt we add to our food at the table or in the kitchen only account for about 6% of the sodium in our diet. Getting rid of it will only make a small dent in our blood pressure. So the next step is to look at what we're buying that is all ready salted.

Unfortunately, that happens to be just about everything that isn't raw, and even some things that are still raw!

We all know that canned soups are very high in sodium. But almost all the vegetables are now available in 'no salt added' forms, including even tomatoes. Choose those. Buying them not only is best for our health, it sends a message to manufacturers that we really care and we really do want healthier food. Vegetables canned with no added salt have no higher sodium levels than the fresh produce. They're just more convenient since they're all ready cooked. And there are no added preservatives. Cooking the vegetable in the can is what preserves them. If you can't find 'no salt added' vegetables, empty the can into a colander and drain it well. Then rinse with running water. You won't get rid of all the salt, but you can cut the amount almost in half.

Another place to watch for added salt is the meat section. Yes, plain raw meat is low sodium. But have you looked at the salt content in the 'seasoned' meats? Some of it is outrageous! The seasoned, ready to cook pork loins and the brined chicken breasts can have huge amounts of sodium. The seasoning is injected into the meat, so unlike canned vegetables, we can't rinse it off. One serving can have half your daily need for sodium in it. Buy plain and add your own seasonings.

The refrigerated, cooked meats are also extremely high in sodium. These are the things like pot roast, shredded beef, meat loaf, chicken breasts, pork roasts and many others. Just one serving of some of these can give you over 2/3 of your recommended daily intake of sodium. Yes, they're quick and convenient, but they're certainly not healthy. Plan ahead, make enough for leftovers on Sunday and you can

eat healthy the rest of the week.

Here's a recipe for this season. Take advantage of kumquats while they're in the stores or on your trees to make this delicious roast chicken. If you can't find kumquat marmalade, use orange marmalade that says it was made with Seville oranges.

Kumquat Roasted Chicken

1 (6-7 pound) roasting chicken	1 Tbsp oil
1 tsp dried sage	1 tsp dried thyme
15 kumquats, washed, cut in half and seeded	20 cloves garlic, unpeeled
1 ¼ cups chicken broth, low sodium	½ cup kumquat marmalade
1 tsp no salt chicken seasoning (Mrs. Dash or other brand)	
1 cup dry white wine (or ½ C water, ½ C orange juice)	

Preheat oven to 375°F. Rub chicken with oil. Mix chicken seasoning, sage and thyme, rub inside and out of chicken. Put chicken in baking pan. Put kumquats inside chicken, lay garlic cloves around outside. Pour broth and wine (or water and juice) into pan.

Cover with foil or lid. Bake 1½ hrs, or until thermometer in meat registers 165°F. Move chicken to platter. Set kumquats and garlic aside. Pour pan juices into saucepan and boil until reduced to about 1 cup of liquid. Stir in marmalade and continue cooking and stirring until thick. Pour glaze over chicken, serve with kumquats and garlic. Serves 8.