

## Innovation in Programming

### Driveway Walk-a-Weigh

COVID-19 has impacted all of our lives and has had a huge effect as we navigate through our day to day responsibilities. Most of our lives are very routine. Get up, eat breakfast, go to work, come home, have dinner, spend time with family, go to bed, and repeat. Another routine that COVID-19 may have impacted is our exercise/wellness routines. Starting in March 2020, gyms and fitness centers as well as some parks and recreation areas closed for business. This left millions of Americans without a place to exercise and continue on with their regular workout/wellness routines. During periods of quarantine from COVID-19, some Georgians were not able to leave their homes. Even after quarantine periods passed, COVID-19 weighed heavily on the minds of fitness center participants that had to decide whether or not it was safe enough of an environment to return to. My neighborhood was no different. Weekly dance lessons were cancelled for the Pixley family. Group exercise classes at the local gym were cancelled for the Costas. Spin class at the YMCA was cancelled for Mr. Johnson. My neighbors, like many others, were left wondering how and when they could get back to a semblance of normalcy. Throughout the spring/summer of 2020 I noticed that a few of my neighbors had started to walk throughout our neighborhood a few times per week. These walks were short in duration and were solitary activities completed with the members of their own households. While these walks were getting my neighbors physically active and out of the house, a sense of belonging and interaction was missing. As a Family and Consumer Sciences Agent for the University of Georgia, I understand how they were feeling. In-person programming was the foundation of community engagement and

outreach for Cooperative Extension. My plan of work within UGA Extension includes chronic disease prevention. Specifically, residents in Madison and Oglethorpe County will decrease morbidity from chronic disease through improved nutrition practices and physical activity. The majority of my programming efforts prior to COVID-19 was in-person programming. COVID-19 restricted in-person programming at the University of Georgia from March 16<sup>th</sup>- July 27<sup>th</sup>. Phase two starting July 27<sup>th</sup>, allowed for flexibility for face-to-face continuing education and services for the public following UGA-approved guidelines. With the allowance from UGA Extension for limited face-to-face programming, and adhering to the guidance of the Center for Disease Control, I created a socially distanced, safe programming opportunity for the people closest to me that needed this the most; my neighbors. I started to plan “Driveway Walk-a-Weigh”. My first step was to recruit the members of my community to participate in this unique educational/wellness opportunity. In a grassroots attempt to market “Driveway Walk-a-Weigh”, I walked door-to-door passing out flyers for “Driveway Walk-a-Weigh”. Due to space limitations and social distancing guidelines, our class was limited to 12 participants each week.

“Driveway Walk-a-Weigh” was adapted from UGA Extension’s Walk-a-Weigh program. Walk-a-Weigh is a research and evidence based curriculum developed at the University of Georgia. Each session of Walk-a-Weigh features a brief presentation on some aspect of weight control and wellness along with a sampling of a lower calorie recipe and time for the group to exercise together. Due to COVID-19 restrictions and safety guidelines, samplings of food were not provided. Additional measures needed to be taken to ensure the safety of my program participants. Each member of the program

had their temperatures taken prior to class beginning each week. Per UGA Guidelines on social distancing, two out of three safety measures must be in place for face to face programming to occur; participants must be at least six feet apart, participants must wear a mask, or the program has to take place outdoors. My driveway was the perfect location for all three social distancing measures to take place. Chairs were spaced 10 feet apart for program participants that did not live in the same household. Each chair and clipboard was sanitized both before and after classes. Facial coverings were required for times where participants would be within six feet of another person. Single use water bottles and single use coffee cups were donated in collaboration with Bell's Grocery Store in Lexington, Georgia. As the instructor for "Driveway Walk-a-Weigh", I wore a facial covering for the duration of each lecture portion of the program.

The 12 participants in our program picked 12 nutrition and wellness based programs from a list of 20, which they found the most interest/need in. The participants in "Driveway Walk-a-Weigh" met for 12 weekly sessions, held Saturday mornings at 8:00AM. Throughout the course of our 12 week "Driveway Walk-a-Weigh" program, our participants engaged in the following lessons:

1. You Can Succeed
2. Sodium
3. Savvy Shopping
4. Water
5. Healthy Eating Out
6. Modifying Recipes
7. Nutrition Labels

8. Saving Money

9. Breakfast

10. Immunity

11. Food Safety

12. Meat

Please see an example lesson of Walk-a-Weigh provided in the supplementary materials portion provided in the award packet.

The second component to “Driveway Walk-a-Weigh” was participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity. Only 24% of Georgia adults meet the federal physical activity guidelines (150 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic activity and two days of strength training per week).<sup>1</sup> Following each of the weight control and wellness lessons, each member of the group walked at their own pace for the next 45 minutes. On average each group member walked approximately 2.5 miles following the nutrition/wellness educational component each week. Throughout the course of the 12 week program members walked a total of **355 miles and lost a combined 59 pounds**. These walks were socially distanced, but in a group setting and allowed for members of our neighborhood to get to know each other and continue elaborating on the weight control and wellness lesson presented prior to the walking portion of the program.

Pre/Post Surveys were distributed for participants of “Driveway Walk-a-Weigh”. 100% of participants indicated that as a result of the program they were extremely confident that they could walk for 30 minutes at a moderate pace without stopping. 100% of the participants also indicated that they extremely enjoyed being physically active. The greatest impact of this program is not in the miles that were walked or the number of



participants reached, but the friendships established within neighbors, and the comradery developed in a time that all of us needed desperately, due to COVID-19. This program provided the members of my community a safe place to learn and establish healthy exercise patterns that still exist today. Even though the 12 week class came to an end, the same group of 12 people still walk together each Saturday morning.

In addition to the impact in my own community, “Driveway Walk-a-Weigh” was promoted on various social media outlets. A total of **10,632 views and 595 engagements (likes, shares, comments, clicks)** were attained on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. This program inspired Extension professionals from Delaware Cooperative Extension, University of Minnesota Cooperative Extension, and LSU/SU Agricultural Research and Extension, to inquire about starting a similar program that utilized social distancing and face to face programming. Plans for additional “Driveway Walk-a-Weigh” classes are scheduled to start in March 2021, with the potential training of community volunteers to lead classes within their own neighborhoods, utilizing similar social distancing measures.

Please see the attached supplemental material for photos of our program, a letter of support from a neighbor, and sample lesson of “Driveway Walk-a-Weigh”.

Sources: <sup>1</sup> America's Health Rankings analysis of CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, United Health Foundation, [AmericasHealthRankings.org](https://AmericasHealthRankings.org), Accessed 2021.





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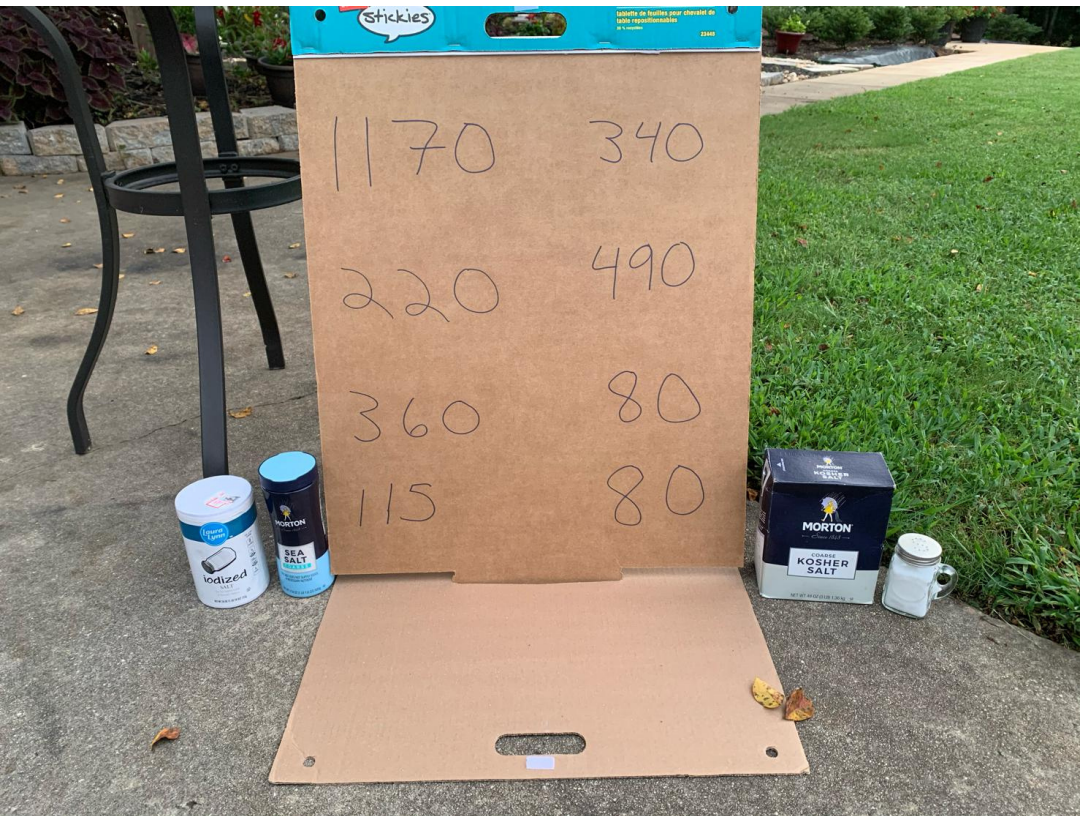


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# Match the food to the sodium content!



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# Water Taste Test



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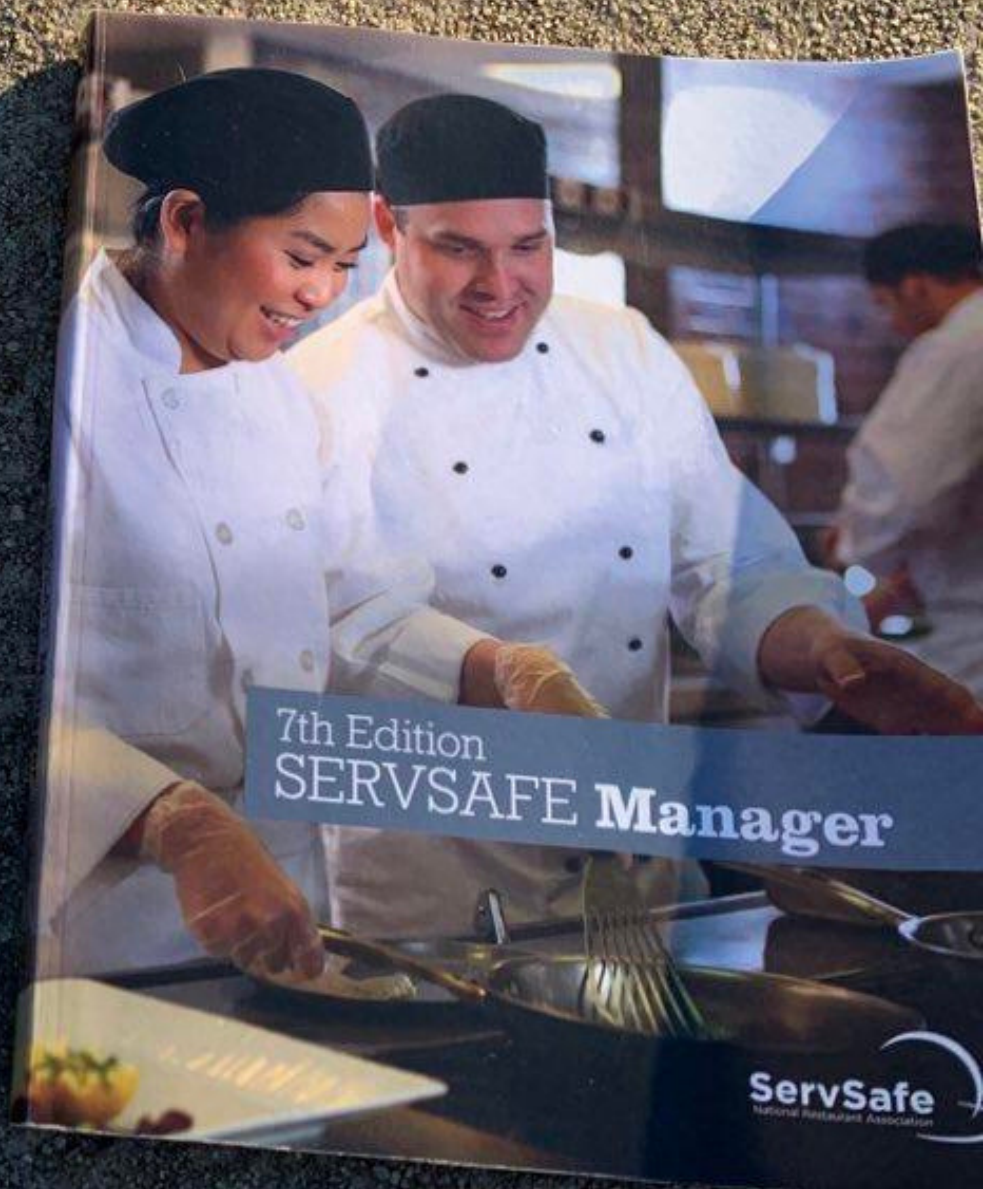
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12/4/2020

Stay Healthy  
with Food Safety



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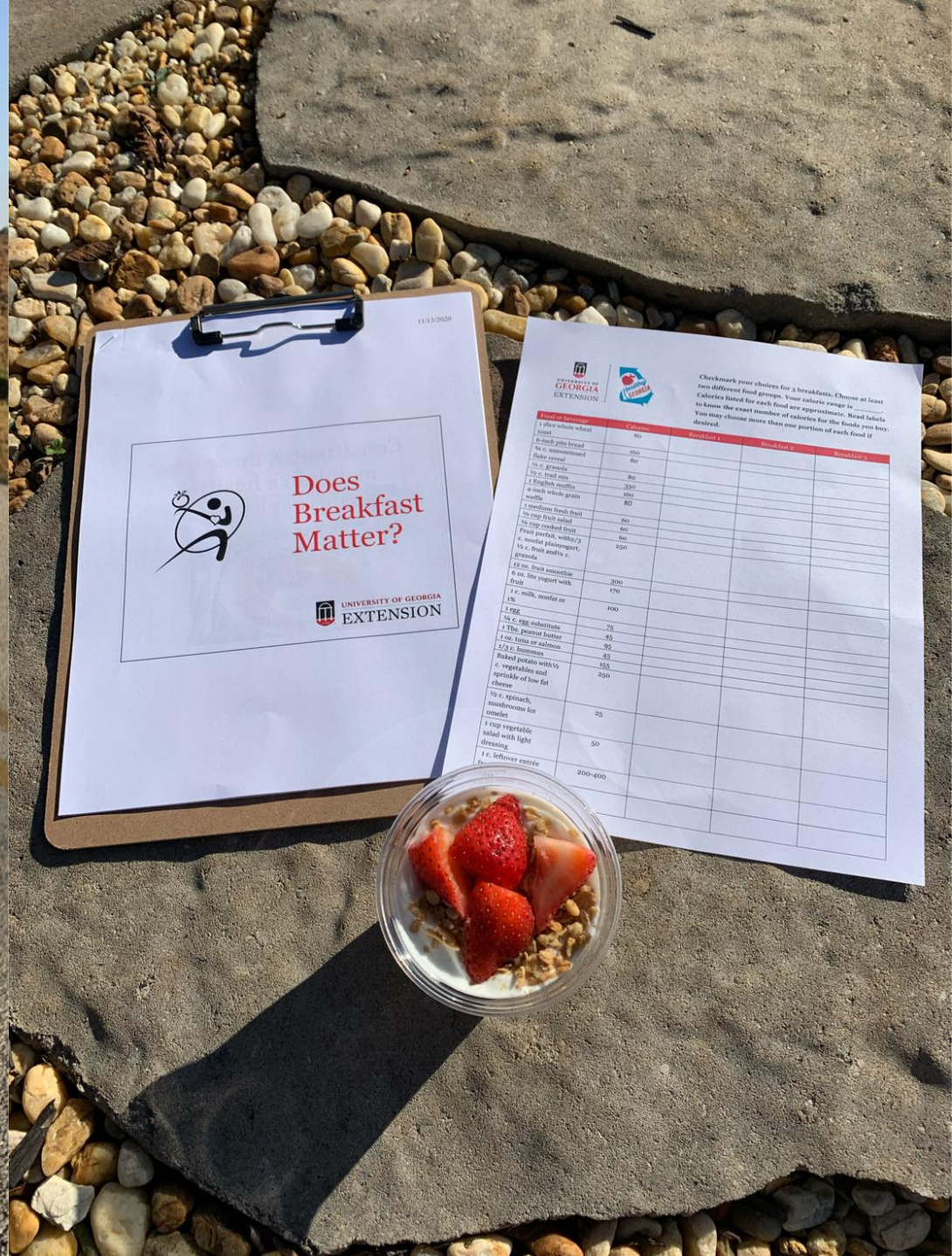




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**ugaextension** When we say "local programming," we mean it! This week, FACS Agent Brad Averill in Madison County held the Walk-a-Weigh program in his driveway for the neighborhood. The program designed to provide communities with skills and knowledge to improve your food intake and become more physically active. Each participant was appropriately socially distanced and learned the basics of developing a plan for successful weight maintenance.

21w



**alisonshayne** That's awesome!



21w 1 like Reply



Liked by gardenwithclarke and 108 others

SEPTEMBER 14, 2020



Add a comment...

Post

The Walk-a-Weigh Program is a series of lessons that will teach you how to make the changes you want to make to achieve permanent weight control. Your neighbor, Family and Consumer Science Agent Brad Averill, will offer a different class each week to provide you with the skills to improve your food intake, become more physically active and adopt the health habits that will allow you to stay happy and healthy for a long time. Each class also includes educational handouts and activities that will reinforce what you have learned. Please wear a face mask each week. Each family will have their own socially distanced space to learn and walk during our program.



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## Driveway Walk-a-Weigh

When: Saturday Mornings

Time: 8:00AM-9:00AM

Where: 14 Pecan Court

Cost: Free

Program Length: 12 weeks

Required: face mask, walking shoes, and weather appropriate clothing

Register by knocking on our front door!

## Letter of support from a neighbor

To Whom It May Concern:

Our names are Charlie and Marilyn Pixley. We live in a small subdivision a few doors down from Brad Averill. Last year Brad went door to door inviting all of us to participate in a weekly class he was offering outside his home. The program he invited us to was called Walk-a-Weigh.

The class each week was educational and helpful for many reasons. Brad presented many classes from "Nutrition Labels: Guide to Good Health", "You too can Succeed at Weight Control", "Cutting salt and other things out of our diets", "How to eat healthy when dining out", "Modifying recipes to support our health", "How to give you immune system a boost", etc. After Brad presented a short lecture on the various topics there were class discussions and questions where Brad offered a clear explanation of the day's topic. Everyone who attended participated and asked questions regarding issues that the members of the class struggled with and had no idea how to change.

After the nutrition education portion of the program, he offered a walking segment of the program. We would walk as a class through our neighborhood area for over 2.5 miles. It was extremely helpful to those that chose to participate in the walk as it got us out, moving, and motivated us to exercise for our health. COVID-19 might have kept us away from the gym, but this Walk-a-Weigh class offered a sense of normalcy that COVID-19 took away from all of us.

Brad has an amazing way of encouraging and presenting helpful information to all of us that we would probably never have thought of or considered. He challenged us to look at nutritional labels on the food we purchase and then explained how to make the necessary choices and changes that would improve our overall health and well-being. He has a way of reaching out to everyone he talks to motivating them, and offering guidance and help to all of us for a better and healthier life style.

COVID-19 interrupted our regular routines of going to the gym. This program provided us with a safe, socially distanced outdoor setting for us to learn and to be active. Masks were provided for each participant for each lesson and chairs and tables were sanitized before and after classes. During these times of uncertainty during COVID-19, we knew that every Saturday, we had a safe place to be active and learn how to live healthier lives. Brad is extremely knowledgeable and if he doesn't know something asked of him, he does the research to give us the correct answers. There is something about him that encourages everyone to want to participate to their best abilities. He encourages families to participate as well. Personally we find him amazing. He is so dedicated to his job at UGA and to help ours and other communities in North Georgia.

Thank you!

Charlie and Marilyn Pixley



# CUTTING SODIUM IN THE DIET



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Revised August 2018 - Connie Crawley, MS, RD; Alison Berg, PhD, RDN, LDN; Hannah Wilson, BS

# WHAT EXCESS SODIUM INTAKE CAN DO

- Elevate blood pressure
- Increase risk for heart attack, stroke & kidney disease
- Increase calcium excretion



## REGULAR BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS ARE IMPORTANT

- Blood pressures **130/80 or higher:**
  - Diagnosed as high blood pressure
  - Need lifestyle changes & medication in many cases



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# LIFESTYLE CHANGES THAT CAN LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE

1. Weight loss
2. Aerobic exercise
3. **DASH diet**
  - Cut sodium
4. Limit alcohol
5. Stop smoking



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# DASH DIET

<b>Foods</b>	<b>Nutrients provided or limited</b>
Vegetables & fruits (8-10 servings/day)	↑ fiber, potassium, magnesium
Low-fat or non-fat dairy (2-3 servings/day)	↑ calcium
Whole grains	↑ fiber, potassium, magnesium
Nuts, beans, & peas	↑ fiber, potassium, magnesium, protein
Lean meat, poultry, & fish	↓ saturated fat, ↑ protein
Limited processed food	↓ sodium, saturated & <i>trans</i> fats



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# WAYS TO CUT BACK ON SODIUM

1. Limit processed foods
2. Limit fast food & other restaurant foods
3. Read the Nutrition Facts label
4. Cook!



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# I) LIMIT PROCESSED FOODS

- Processed foods
  - Chips, crackers, etc.
  - Canned foods (soups, meats, sauces, vegetables, etc.)
  - Frozen foods (pizza, frozen meals, vegetables with added sauces/seasonings)
  - Condiments (ketchup, mustard, salad dressings, soy sauce, etc.)
- Cheese



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## 2) LIMIT FAST FOOD AND OTHER RESTAURANT FOOD

Fast Food Item	Sodium (mg)
Small hamburger	510
Cheeseburger	700
Grilled Chicken Sandwich	820
Medium Fries	260



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### 3) READ THE NUTRITION FACTS LABEL

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
8 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>2/3 cup (55g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	<b>14%</b>
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	<b>20%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	<b>10%</b>
Calcium 260mg	<b>20%</b>
Iron 8mg	<b>45%</b>
Potassium 235mg	<b>6%</b>
<small>* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small>	



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# WHAT SHOULD I CHOOSE?

- Choose **more** foods with **5% or less** of the Daily Value
  - Generally considered low sodium foods
- **Limit** intake of foods with **20% or more** of the Daily Value
  - Generally considered high sodium foods



## 4) COOK!

Food, prepared without added salt	Sodium (mg)
Homemade Hamburger	72
Whole Grain Bun	200
Baked Potato	8
Margarine (1 tsp)	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>313</b>



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# CHANGE SOME COOKING HABITS

- Don't add salt to cooking water
- Decrease the amount of salt in recipes by half
- Replace with herbs & spices
  - $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of each dried spice or herb per 4 servings
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  - 1 teaspoon of each fresh herb per 4 servings
- Remove salt from the table



## WORD OF CAUTION

**NEVER STOP OR CHANGE BLOOD  
PRESSURE MEDICINE WITHOUT  
CHECKING WITH YOUR DOCTOR**



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## SUMMARY

Cutting back on sodium as part of the DASH diet can help lower blood pressure. Cut back on sodium by:

1. Limiting processed foods
2. Limiting fast food & other restaurant food
3. Reading the Nutrition Facts label & choosing low sodium foods
4. Cooking at home without adding much salt



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