If a food has a label, it probably contains sodium.

Most foods that come in jars, cans, and packages have had salt added to them already. Sometimes other forms of sodium have been added also. As a result, canned and packaged foods often contain a lot of sodium.
The best way to know if a food has a lot of sodium is to read the label on the package.

Look for both the “Nutrition Facts” and the list of ingredients.

The part of the label titled “Nutrition Facts” tells you about the nutrients in the food. This is where you will learn the exact amount of sodium in one serving. Be sure to notice how large—or small—a serving is. (See next page for sample Nutrition Facts label.)

The List of Ingredients tells you everything that was used to make the food. Salt and other forms of sodium will be listed here.

Labels can also help you find foods low in sodium.

Some food labels make special claims about the sodium content of the food.

Sodium claims and what they mean:

“Sodium Free”
Less than 5 mg per serving

“Very Low Sodium”
35 mg or less per serving

“Low Sodium”
Less than 140 mg per serving

“Reduced or Light Sodium”
Contains 25–50% less sodium than the regular version of the same product, but may still be high in sodium.

Always check the Nutrition Facts for exact sodium content.

These tips can help you choose which foods to buy:

- Look for products with 100–200 mg of sodium per serving.
- Avoid foods with more than 140 mg of sodium in a serving.
- Frozen dinners and complete meals are okay up to 400 mg.
- Compare brands and choose the ones with less sodium.
The label information is based on the serving size listed here. For this product, it is 1/2 cup.

The amount of sodium in a half-cup serving is 150 milligrams, or 7% of the recommended daily intake.

The Daily Value or recommended intake for sodium is 2400 milligrams or less. This is a reasonable total for most people, but too high for those with heart failure or high blood pressure.