

# *Slimtone*

## High Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the pressure, which the heart and arteries apply in order to squeeze the blood around the body. When you are sitting or laying quietly your blood pressure stays at a steady resting level. High blood pressure (hypertension) means that the resting blood pressure is higher than normal. Some of the contributory factors that might increase blood pressure are:

- ▶ being overweight
- ▶ Smoking
- ▶ drinking too much alcohol
- ▶ lack of regular exercise
- ▶ eating too much salt
- ▶ too much stress

High blood pressure makes the heart work harder and speeds up the “furring up” of the arteries, so you are in more danger of having angina, a heart attack or a stroke.

There is a lot you can do to keep your blood pressure at a normal level.

- ▶ watch your weight
- ▶ stop smoking
- ▶ drink moderately
- ▶ take some exercise
- ▶ eat less salt
- ▶ Relax

The salt we add when cooking and at the table is sodium chloride. It is the amount of sodium that we eat that is important. Sodium is also found in baking powder and MGS, a flavour enhancer found in sauces like soy sauce and Worcestershire sauce.

## FOODS WITH A HIGH SODIUM CONTENT

Bedtime drinks such as Horlicks, crackers, Ryvita, some bread, most breakfast cereals, all cheeses, all pickles and chutneys, smoked fish, shellfish, bacon, ham, tinned meat and fish, all salted nuts, all packet puddings, most packet sauces, stock cubes, packet soups, milk chocolate, most tinned vegetables and butter.

### **REDUCED SALT**

Look out for reduced-salt stock cubes, sauces, gravy mixes, crisps, tinned vegetables and beans.

Buy unsalted margarines that are high in polyunsaturates, unsalted peanuts, low or no salt muesli.

### **SALT SUBSTITUTES**

Most are a mixture of sodium chloride and potassium chloride. A few are potassium chloride alone. They are expensive. Potassium does have a salty taste but it also has a bitter aftertaste.

### **SALT -THE ADVICE**

- ▶ read food labels: avoid salty food
- ▶ eat plenty of fresh foods
- ▶ use less salt in cooking. Use more herbs, spices, lemon juice instead
- ▶ use less salt at the table
- ▶ avoid processed foods

See our fact sheet on hidden salt.

For Further Information Visit - [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)