Small and Rural Hospitals Constituency Section
Sodium Reduction Initiative
Best Practices/Innovative Strategies
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Background

Poor nutrition is a risk factor for four of the seven leading causes of death in the United States: heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes. High sodium intake increases blood pressure, which is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, the leading cause of death in Illinois. Cardiovascular disease includes heart disease, stroke and other vascular diseases.

The Illinois sodium reduction grant is a partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program, Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Illinois Hospital Association (IHA). The purpose of this grant is to initiate comprehensive, population-based environmental change sodium reduction strategies in the small and rural hospital setting.

IDPH and IHA worked with nine small and rural hospitals to implement the best practice strategies for sodium reduction outlined in the Illinois Cardiovascular Health Program Hospital Sodium Strategies Guide (based on the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion’s Under Pressure: Strategies for Sodium Reduction in the Hospital Environment (2011 guide).

Since hospitals are uniquely positioned to impact the food supply in their community through modeling healthy nutrition and responsible practices, each hospital developed unique health eating strategies to best fit their needs. Through this grant opportunity, each hospital engaged a workgroup of medical staff, food service staff, administrators, and community partners to discuss the current food environment and how it relates to the community, employee health and wellness. This workgroup developed a comprehensive food policy to include purchasing decisions, healthy food choices, nutrient standards, patient meals, and food sold within the hospital.

The workgroups utilized marketing techniques to promote healthy foods in the hospital and in the community. The groups also worked with community partners to develop education activities for patients, employees and community residents promoting healthy nutrition and eating habits. This document contains some of the innovative approaches used by the nine participating hospitals along with sample materials of their initiatives.
Clay County Hospital, Flora  
Contact: Darla Hout, Director of Human Resources and Marketing, 618-662-1643

Marketing of Lower-Sodium Diets
- **Brochures:** Flyers and brochures have been placed in the cafeteria to educate employees and visitors on the benefits of following a low-sodium diet and how to read food labels. Information from the FDA Office of Women’s Health was also used.
- **Signs:** A sign distinguished how much sodium intake the average individual should have daily.

Education Programs/Recognition
- **Meals for a Healthy Heart:** Clay County Hospital partnered with the University of Illinois Extension Office to host a two part seminar on Meals for a Healthy Heart. All hospital employees were invited to attend at no cost. This program was marketed to hospital employees and the community via radio and newspaper ads and internal memos. The program was designed for anyone interested in preventing or managing heart disease. In each session, participants received recipes, watched cooking demonstrations, tasted foods based on their dietary needs, and learned about proper diet and exercise to better care for their health.
- **Dietary Staff:** Food Safety Tips for Safe Produce was reviewed by the dietary staff in regards to using more fresh produce.
- **Recognition:** Each staff member that picked a low-sodium item was entered into a drawing for a gift card.

Food Offerings
- **Options:** Low-sodium foods were identified and ordered for cafeteria meals. There was some resistance to certain low-sodium foods, but dietary personnel experimented with others spices to give the food more flavor.
- **Labeling:** Foods in the cafeteria line, coolers and vending machines are now all labeled for sodium. Sodium is also noted on the daily menu email.
- **Salt Shakers:** Salt shakers were removed from the tables and Mrs. Dash and pepper are available. Those who want salt must retrieve a packet from the front of the cafeteria.
Following a low-sodium diet helps control high blood pressure (hypertension), swelling, and water build-up (edema). A low-sodium diet also can help decrease breathing difficulties caused when the weakened heart has difficulty pumping excess fluid out of the body.

Your doctor may recommend that you consume no more than 2,000 mg (2g) of sodium per day. A low-sodium diet means more than just eliminating the salt shaker from the table! However, that is a good start since one teaspoon salt = 2,300 mg of sodium. It is important to keep a record of the amount of sodium you consume every day. Write down the amount in mg after each meal or snack.

**SODIUM GUIDELINES**

- Use fresh ingredients and/or foods with no salt added.
- For favorite recipes, you may need to use other ingredients and delete or decrease the salt added. Salt can be removed from any recipe except from those containing yeast.
- Try orange or pineapple juice as a base for meat marinades.
- Avoid convenience foods such as canned soups, entrees, vegetables, pasta and rice mixes, frozen dinners, instant cereal and puddings, and gravy sauce mixes.
- Select frozen entrees that contain 450 mg or less of sodium. However, limit to one of these frozen entrees per day. Check the Nutrition Facts label on the package for sodium content.
- Use fresh, frozen, no added salt canned vegetables, or canned vegetables that have been rinsed before they are prepared.
- Low sodium canned soups may be used.
- Avoid mixed seasonings and spice blends that include salt, such as garlic salt. Don't use a salt substitute unless you check with your doctor first.
Understanding Low-Sodium Diets

Planning what you eat and balancing your meals are important ways to manage your health. Eating healthy often means making changes in your current eating habits. A registered dietitian can provide an in-depth personalized nutrition education, tailor these general guidelines to meet your needs, and help you begin a personal action plan. Some evidence suggests a daily sodium restriction to 1500 milligrams (1.5 grams) may benefit patients with cardiovascular risks including heart failure, hypertension, African-American ethnicity, and all middle-aged and older adults.

Here are some basic guidelines that will help you get started:

- Control the sodium in your diet. Decrease the total amount of sodium you consume to 2,000 mg (2 g) per day.
- Learn to read food labels. Use the label information on food packages to help you make the best low-sodium selections.
- Include high-fiber foods such as vegetables, cooked dried peas and beans (legumes), whole-grain foods, bran, cereals, pasta, rice and fresh fruit. Fiber is the indigestible part of plant food that helps move food along the digestive tract, better controls blood glucose levels, and may reduce the level of cholesterol in the blood. Foods high in fiber include natural antioxidants, which reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. The goal for everyone is to consume 25 to 35 grams of fiber per day.
- Maintain a healthy body weight. This includes losing weight if you are overweight. Limit your total daily calories, follow a low-fat diet and exercise regularly to achieve or maintain your ideal body weight.

Learning to read food labels

Food labels are standardized by the U.S. government's National Labeling and Education Act (NLEA). Nutrition labels and an ingredient list are required on most foods so you can make the best selection for a healthy lifestyle. Review the food label below. If you do not know how much total sodium is in this product, ask your dietician, or health care provider, to show you how to read food labels and apply the information to your personal needs.

- A. The serving size represents the typical amount eaten by an adult.
- B. The sodium content is listed on the food label per serving size. Ignore the % daily value and focus on the amount of mg sodium per serving. Decrease the total amount of sodium you consume to 2,000 milligrams (mg) or 2 grams (g) per day.

Sodium guidelines

Sodium is a mineral found in many foods. It helps keep normal fluids balanced in the body. Most people eat foods containing more sodium than they need. Some foods may be high in sodium and not taste salty. Eating too much sodium causes the body to keep or retain too much water.
Clay County Hospital
Join CCH In Attacking the Low-Sodium Diets

Low sodium is a way of labeling food products which food manufacturers use to make customers aware of the products low salt content. Low sodium foods are generally advertised as such for people who for whatever reason seek out foods with low sodium. Usually these are people who are health conscious...

Using seasonal produce and buying fresh fish, meat and poultry are among the best ways to control salt in your diet. Yes, packaged, canned and frozen foods might be more convenient. But often hiding within them are high levels of sodium. If you're on a salt-free diet, you can find a range of low-sodium products, ranging from chicken broth to soy sauce, in your neighborhood supermarket. But the best trick of all — experiment with aromatic herbs and spices instead of salt. The result will be delicious dishes with big flavor and you won't miss a thing.

Clay County Hospital is offering more low-sodium foods through the cafeteria & vending machines. Stop by the cafeteria for informational brochures on low-sodium diets and join us on June 11th & June 18th at CCH for an informational 2 part seminar on Meals for a Healthy Heart. 3:00 P.M. — 3:30 P.M. Sponsored by the University of Illinois Extension Office. Register on line at www.web.extension.illinois.edu/ccc or stop by the Human Resource Dept. at CCH.

Clay County Hospital BJC HealthCare

For more information please call 618-662-1639
911 Stacy Bark Drive, Flora, IL
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<tr>
<td>APPLESAUCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>PEACHES</td>
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<td>ORANGES</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF JELLO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rice Krispie Treat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Animal Crackers</td>
<td>140mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reg. Baked Chips</td>
<td>170mg</td>
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**Dr. John Warner Hospital, Clinton**  
Contact: Melinda Monier, MS, RD, LDN, 217-935-9571 ext. 3228

**Marketing of Lower Sodium Diets**
- *Table Tents*: Table tents were used to encourage those eating in the cafeteria to cut their salt intake. Information included restaurants, processed foods, and reading labels.
- *Signs*: There is a sign in the organization that discusses what common healthy statements really mean.

**Education**
- *Food Policy*: A sodium food policy was developed.
- *Health Fair*: A health fair shared information on sodium and high blood pressure issues. Information on healthy eating and incorporating more fresh foods grown locally were discussed.

**Food Offerings**
- *Mock Farmer’s Market*: A Mock Farmer’s Market was established with the food produce company to provide central state’s vegetables and fruit. Employees were able to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables at work. To find more information on how Dr. John Warner Hospital adapted this idea, view the following links: [www.healthyfoodinhealthcare.org](http://www.healthyfoodinhealthcare.org), [www.mdh2e.org](http://www.mdh2e.org), and [www.buy-local-challenge.com](http://www.buy-local-challenge.com).
- *Labeling*: Foods in the cafeteria line are now labeled with stickers to show which foods are low sodium, sugar free, low cholesterol, and reduced salt. A guide is provided to detail what each label means. The labels are also used for patients’ meals. The vending machine also includes a list of what the most popular foods are and their sodium levels. Positive feedback has been received from staff regarding the label changes.
CUT THE SALT!

TOO MUCH SALT RAISES BLOOD PRESSURE AND CAN LEAD TO HEART ATTACK AND STROKE

TOO MUCH SALT IS HARMFUL: It’s the sodium in salt that makes blood pressure go up. Cutting down on salt helps prevent and control blood pressure. Most people should eat no more than 1,500 mg of sodium per day. Even people with normal blood pressure benefit from lower blood pressure.

MOST RESTAURANTS MEALS AND PROCESSED FOODS ARE LOADED WITH SALT: Most of the salt we eat—almost 80%—comes from packaged, processed and store-bought food, and from restaurant meals. Only about 10% comes from salt we add during cooking or at the table. The rest is found naturally in food.

CHECK FOOD LABELS BEFORE YOU BUY: Read the nutrition facts label to compare products for sodium. Be sure to check the serving size and number of servings per container.
DR. JOHN WARNER HOSPITALS’ LOW SODIUM FOOD POLICY:

1. WHEN POSSIBLE LOCALLY GROWN PRODUCE WILL BE USED IN THIS FACILITY FOR PATIENTS AND IN OUR CAFETERIA.
2. OPTIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE THAT WILL BE LOW IN SODIUM (LESS THAN 140 MG PER SERVING) AND REDUCED SODIUM (25% LESS SODIUM THAN THE USUAL PRODUCT) AND THESE ITEMS WILL BE LABELED FOR OUR CLIENTS AND STAFF TO EASILY SEE.
3. HEALTHY, LOW SODIUM FOOD OPTIONS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR ANY OF OUR CATERING EVENTS.
DJWH MOCk FARMER'S MARKET
DATE: AUG. 8, 2012
WHERE: CAFÉ
WHO: HOSPITAL AND RH EMPLOYEES
TIME: 10-11:00 a.m., 3-4:00 p.m.
PRODUCE: Available from GFS and products are from Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and other central states for your enjoyment. Buy local, buy in season, eat fresh for a healthier you! Sponsored by the Dietary Department and prices are low for added value for you!

Peaches Cherry tomatoes Nectarines
Plums
Yellow cherry tomatoes Red Potatoes
Zucchini Blueberries Blackberries
Jersey Community Hospital, Jerseyville
Contact: Kathy Pruitt, Director of Food Service, 618-498-8355

Marketing of Lower Sodium Diets

- **Recipes:** New recipes are being distributed to hospital employees at meetings. This will include low-sodium and low-fat options.
- **Signs:** Different sodium materials are being distributed through the hospital. Some materials included information from:
  - USDA *Salt and Sodium 10 Tips to Help you Cut Back*
  - University of Connecticut *How Much Salt*; and
  - Foodandhealth.com *Make Better Choices to Lower Salt*.
- Jersey Community Hospital also developed a flyer on *Pass up the Salt*.

Education

- **Chef:** A chef is being brought in to the hospital to provide education to dietary. Low sodium, low-fat cooking education is being provided by the chef.
- **Patients:** Education is provided to hospital patients on low-sodium diets prior to discharge. The American Heart Association’s *Know and Go Cards-Blood Pressure* are used for this education. Jersey Community Hospital Wellness Center staff also provides low-sodium nutrition education to participants at the weekly blood pressure screenings using the same materials.

Food Offerings

- **Steamer:** A new steamer is being used to cut down on the amount of canned vegetables. This will increase the availability of steamed vegetables, side dishes, and entrees. In turn, this will reduce the amount of sodium in foods that are provided in the cafeteria.
- **Samples:** Samples of low-sodium, low-fat cafeteria food items are being provided. This will help the staff choose foods that employees and customers would like to have in the cafeteria on a regular basis.
- **Local Restaurant:** The hospital worked with a local restaurant to showcase the low sodium and heart healthy items on their menu. Logos were established to identify these foods.
Pass Up the Salt
Removing Excess Sodium From Your Eating Plan

Limiting your sodium can help prevent or reduce high blood pressure, which can reduce your risk for heart disease and stroke.

Sodium is found in:

- Processed, convenience foods
- Foods that you add salt to during preparation
- Foods you add salt to at the table

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 recommends that healthy adults younger than 51 years of age limit their sodium intake to 2300 milligrams (mg) per day. Individuals age 51 and older and those with hypertension, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease should limit their intake to 1500 mg/day.

Shopping
Reading food labels can help you choose lower-sodium foods. Look for these claims:

- Sodium free
- Low sodium
- Very low sodium
- Light in sodium
- Reduced (or less) sodium
- Unsalted

Avoid purchasing those foods, which usually are high in sodium:

- Breaded fish, poultry, and meats
- Most cheeses, including cottage cheese and cheese spreads
- Instant hot cereals and many ready-to-eat cereals
- Boxed and flavored mixes—rice, potatoes, macaroni and cheese, instant noodles, and couscous
- Canned vegetables
- Frozen vegetables in sauces
- Soups—instant, canned, and jarred, including broth and bouillon
- Seasonings made with salt, celery salt, garlic salt, and onion salt
- Sauces, gravies, and instant sauce and gravy mixes
- Canned seafood—tuna, sardines, mackerel, sardines, anchovies, oysters, caviar, and crab
- Snack foods—chips, crackers, salted nuts, pork rinds, and pretzels
- Pickled foods—olives, pickles, relish, sauerkraut, and herring
- Condiments—ketchup, soy sauce, steak sauce, teriyaki sauce, salad dressings, barbecue sauce, mayonnaise, mustard, chili sauce, and Worcestershire sauce
- Frozen dinners
- Meal mixes
- Pot pies
- Pizza
- Smoked, salted, or cured meats—bacon, ham, hot dogs, bologna, salami, pepperoni, luncheon meats, sausage, corned beef, chipped beef, and meats koshared by salting
- Buttermilk
- Butter
- Salt pork

Select these foods more frequently:

- Vegetable oils
- Fresh or frozen fruits
• Fresh, frozen (no sauce), or no-added-salt canned vegetables
• Skinless poultry
• Lean cuts of meat
• Fresh or frozen (not breaded) fish and shellfish
• Plain rice
• Plain noodles
• Couscous
• Quinoa and other grains
• Reduced or low-sodium soups, broth, and bouillon
• Salt-free spices and herbs—garlic powder, onion powder, basil, oregano, sage, thyme, cilantro, cumin, pepper, mint, etc.
• Flavorings—vinegar and lemon or lime juice
• Some hot cereals
• Lower-sodium ready-to-eat cereals
• Nonfat, low-fat (1%), or evaporated skim milk

Preparing food at home
When making food at home:

• Use less salt or no salt when preparing foods
• Drain and rinse canned foods, such as tuna or beans, to remove some sodium
• Add fresh or dried herbs and spices or vinegar to foods to enhance flavor, rather than adding salt:
  • Allspice—ground meats, stews, tomatoes, and peppers
  • Almond extract—puddings and fruits
  • Basil—eggs, fish, lamb, beef, stews, salads, soups, and sauces
  • Bay leaves—meats, stews, chicken, turkey, soups, and tomatoes
  • Chives—eggs, salads, sauces, soups, meats, vegetables, and rice
  • Cider vinegar—salads, vegetables, potatoes, and sauces
  • Cilantro—meats, chicken, fish, tomatoes, rice, and pasta
  • Cinnamon—fruits and bread
  • Curry powder—meats, chicken, fish, and tomatoes
  • Dill weed—fish, soups, and potatoes
  • Garlic—meats, poultry, fish, vegetables, rice, and pasta
  • Ginger—chicken, fish, and fruits
  • Mustard powder—ground meats, salads, sauces, and potatoes
  • Nutmeg—fruits and potatoes
  • Paprika—meats, fish, stews, sauces, soups, and vegetables
  • Parsley—meats, fish, stews, sauces, soups, salads, and vegetables
  • Rosemary—chicken, veal, meats, potatoes, bread, and pasta
  • Sage—meats, stews, biscuits, tomatoes, and green beans
  • Savory—salads, eggs, meats, soups, green beans, and tomatoes
  • Tarragon—poultry and meats
  • Thyme—eggs, meats, sauces, soups, vegetables, and tomatoes

Dining
While dining:

• Remove the saltshaker from the table
• Avoid ordering foods with sauces and condiments when dining out
• Request that your meal is made without salt, if you are not preparing it yourself
• Spice up your food with these condiments, instead of using salt:
  • Black pepper (freshly ground, if possible, for best flavor)
  • Hot pepper sauce
  • Crushed red pepper
  • Garlic powder
  • Onion powder

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Marketing of Lower Sodium Diets

- **Brochures:** There is a magazine rack in the cafeteria that includes heart healthy, low-sodium foods and general health information. Over 50% of staff that responded to a survey noted that they had read some of the information included. Healthy nutrition messages are also located on the salad bar.

- **Emails & Surveys:** House wide emails have been sent to staff to make them aware of any changes and the response back has been very positive from staff. A survey was also sent to the staff to ask questions in regards to the changes and sodium. A total of 87 employees responded and gave good feedback to the dietary staff.

- **Environment:** The cafeteria now has many pictures of fruit and vegetables. Staff is now wearing fruit and vegetable aprons as another reminder to customers. Healthy food pictures are also on the weekly menus.

Education

- **Cooking Demonstration:** A cooking demonstration was held at the local library’s adult summer program and children’s program.

- **Healthy Habits Table:** A station is set up in the corner of the cafeteria for employees to monitor their blood pressure. Blood pressure logs and a food scale are provided. Also included on the table are sodium test tubes that show sodium amounts for various foods and amount the average American consumes and the amount that they should be consuming.

- **Portion Plates:** New plates are being used in the cafeteria that show recommended portions. They were also provided for 40 cardiac rehab patients to take home and also provided to some inpatients who were admitted with heart problems.

- **Staff & Vending Involvement:** Dietary staff is kept up-to-date on any new product changes or process changes. This is done via the communication board or daily communication huddles. The dietary staff has been actively involved in the entire initiative and has been very supportive of the changes. In response to these changes, the staff has also looked to be healthier and has lost a total of 66 pounds. A relationship was also formed with the snack company and the staff is more aware of any changes and/or healthy snack recommendations.

Food Offerings

- **Labeling:** All foods are labeled in the cafeteria. The new menu board includes a heart logo for healthier foods and also lists the carbohydrates in each serving. In the food service line, complete nutrition information is provided. This is also included on the glass of the salad bar as well. The vending machines have a system to show foods that are better for you based on a red, yellow, and green light system. Information for vending labeling was found at [www.nems-v.com](http://www.nems-v.com). In addition to labeling everyday foods, all condiment containers also include nutrition information. Clearly labeled 2 oz. portion spoons are now being used at the salad bar so consumers can visualize portions that they are using and measured glasses are used at the fountain machine. According to the survey 72.4% of respondents are looking at the nutrition facts that are now posted.
- **Salt Shakers:** Salt shakers were removed from the tables and replaced with Mrs. Dash. The salt packets that are available near the condiments are labeled with the amount of sodium. According to a staff survey, 50% of respondents are using less salt in the cafeteria since the program began.

- **Options:** Some regular products have been changed to lighter versions, lower fat versions, and fat free versions.
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Breakfast Special</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<td>Cook’s Choice-Ask for Details</td>
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<td><em>Menu Subject to change daily</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, Aug 27</td>
<td>Biscuits and Gravy (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Aug 28</td>
<td>Tortellini Soup (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, Aug 29</td>
<td>Enchilada Soup (1)</td>
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<td>Stuffed Pepper Soup (1)</td>
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<td>Friday, Aug 31</td>
<td>Stuffed Pepper Soup (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, Sep 1</td>
<td>Tomato Soup (1)</td>
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- SOUP          | ENTRÉE                          | SANDWICH | SANDWICH | STARCH | VEGETABLE | VEGETABLE | SALAD     | SALAD | SALAD | SALAD | SALAD | DESSERT |
---|----------------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| Beef Noodle Soup♥ (1) | Broccoli Casserole (1)          | Chicken Fajita Wrap (1) | Yams and Apples♥ (2) | Spinach♥ (0) | Italian Mixed Veggies♥ (0) | Chocolate Delight (2) | Spiral Pasta Salad♥ (1) | Pineapple♥ (1) | Scotcheroos (3) |        | Brownie (2” SLICE)♥ (2) |        |
| Stuffed Pepper Soup♥ (1) | Sliced Turkey♥ (0)               | Chicken Salad Sandwich♥ (2) | Mashed Potatoes & Gravy♥ (2) | Creamed Corn♥ (1) | Green Bean Casserole♥ (1) | Cantaloupe♥ (1) | Apple Pear Salad♥ (1) | Cucumber & Onion Salad♥ (1) | Monster Cookies |        | Love Pie (2) |
| Stuffed Pepper Soup♥ (1) | Lean Swiss Steak♥ (1)            | Ham Salad Sandwich (2) | Broccoli Rice Caserole (1) | Capri Mixed Vegetables♥ (1) | Candied Carrots♥ (1) | Strawberry Mousse♥ (1) | Broccoli Cashew Salad♥ (1) | Ambrosia♥ (1) |        |        |

*Note: the numbers behind menu item indicates the total # of carbohydrate servings (1)=1 carbohydrate choice
♥ indicates the item is less than or = to 3 grams saturated fat, no trans fat, and less than 400 mg sodium per serving

- serving sizes=1/2 cup, 3 oz. meat-
Traffic Lights to Your Success
Visit the vending machines in this building and select healthy choices using the traffic light scheme

Not As Healthy
Healthy
Healthiest

For more information, visit www.nems-v.com
Traffic Lights to Your Success
Use the traffic light scheme to help you make better choices. Use the nutritional information below to help you choose the best foods to benefit your health.

* Green - Healthiest Choice
- Plain water without flavoring, additives, or carbonation
- 8oz. 100% fruit juice or 100% low-sodium vegetable juice
- Skim or 1% milk; 8-ounce servings of low-fat or nonfat chocolate or strawberry milk with no more than 22 grams of sugar
- No more than 35% of calories from total sugar

* Yellow - Healthy Choice
- Seltzer water and club soda
- Non-caffeinated, artificially sweetened,* caffeinated,* nonfortified (vitamin or mineral) beverages with less than 5 calories per portion as packaged
- Unsweetened tea* or artificially sweetened tea*
- 100% fruit or 100% low-sodium vegetable juice > 8 oz.
- Sugar-free, reduced/low-sugar sport or reduced/low-sugar energy drinks
- Flavored skim or 1% milk with artificial sweeteners ≤ 12 oz.
- 2% flavored or plain milk ≤ 12 oz.*
- No more than 35% of calories from total sugar

* Red - Not as Healthy of a Choice
- Does not meet Green or Yellow criteria.

*Adults only

For More Information
http://www.nems-v.com

Traffic Lights to Your Success
Use the traffic light scheme to help you make better choices. Use the nutritional information below to help you choose the best foods to benefit your health.

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- Seltzer water and club soda
- Non-caffeinated, artificially sweetened,* caffeinated,* nonfortified (vitamin or mineral) beverages with less than 5 calories per portion as packaged
- Unsweetened tea* or artificially sweetened tea*
- 100% fruit or 100% low-sodium vegetable juice > 8 oz.
- Sugar-free, reduced/low-sugar sport or reduced/low-sugar energy drinks
- Flavored skim or 1% milk with artificial sweeteners ≤ 12 oz.
- 2% flavored or plain milk ≤ 12 oz.*
- No more than 35% of calories from total sugar

* Red - Not as Healthy of a Choice
- Does not meet Green or Yellow criteria.

*Adults only

For More Information
http://www.nems-v.com
Traffic Lights to Your Success

Use the traffic light scheme to help you make better choices. Use the nutritional information below to help you choose the best foods to benefit your health.

**Green**
Healthiest Choice
- ≤ 35% calories from fat
- < 10% calories from saturated fat
- Zero trans fat
- ≤ 400 mg of sodium
- ≤ 35% calories from sugars (except yogurt)
- ≤ 200 calories per portion

**Yellow**
Healthier Choice
- ≤ 35% calories from fat
- < 10% calories from saturated fat
- Zero trans fat
- ≤ 400 mg of sodium
- ≤ 35% calories from sugars
- ≤ 200 calories per portion

**Red**
Least Healthy Choice
- Does not meet green or yellow criteria
**OSF St. Mary Medical Center, Galesburg**  
Contact: Judy Hart, Director of Dietary, 309-344-3161 ext. 5595

**Marketing of Lower Sodium Diets**
- *Signs:* There are now signs that promote the local farmer’s market in town.
- *Survey:* The Dietary Council developed a questionnaire to be distributed to all employees. Based on the feedback, cafeteria menu items will be revised. The Dietary Council has also recommended additional educational material to be incorporated into the menus. Participants recommended less cream soups, more fresh foods, and more low-calorie options.

**Food Offerings**
- *Labeling:* Menus now include some nutritional information for cholesterol, calories and sodium. The patient’s menus have also been updated to include salt shakers to identify items high in sodium. Some items have also been updated to include less sodium. Window clings with information are also being added.
- *Options:* Lower sodium and lower fat items have been added to the inventory list to facilitate ease in ordering. Also, additional baked snack items have been added to the menu. These items have been added to the inventory list so that they can be easily reordered. More fresh fruit has been added to the options in the cafeteria.
- *Salt Shakers:* Salt shakers are now placed at 1/3 of the tables. More salt shakers will be removed over time. This will allow staff to get used to the idea of retrieving salt from the condiment cart.
Galesburg Farmers’ Market—Every Saturday from 8 a.m. until noon, May through October

Local producers—vegetables, fruit, cookies, pies and breads, eggs, meat, honey, flowers

and much more.
Welcome!
Welcome to OSF St. Mary Medical Center. We want to make your stay with us as convenient and pleasant as possible. We are pleased to offer a room service menu for your dining experience.

Room Service Ordering is available from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and is designed to allow you to dine as you would in a restaurant or hotel. Simply call Extension 3663 (FOOD) to order your meal. We will deliver your selection to your room within 45 minutes.

The Room Service Menu is designed to promote good nutrition and meet the needs of our patients. The general healthful diet promotes a healthy body weight; using sugars in moderation; choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat, trans fats and cholesterol; choose plenty of vegetables, fruits and grain products; protein sources include lean meat fish, poultry and vegetable sources use salt and sodium in moderation.

In support of the Salt/Sodium Reduction initiative, the recipes developed for the Room Service Menu includes lower sodium entrees, gravies, and chips and additional salt is not added during or at the end of the cooking process. Items that are high in sodium are identified with 🍗.

Please be aware that if your doctor has prescribed a special diet for you, some items may not be permitted. Your host or hostess taking your meal request will be happy to offer alternate selections when you place your order.

Special Request: If you would like something that is not listed on the menu please ask the order taker if it is available.

Do you have question about your special diet or need to talk to a dietitian? Call extension 5593 or tell the order taker you would like to speak to a dietitian.

Visitors are welcome in the cafeteria, located on the ground floor of the hospital. The cafeteria opens at 6:30 a.m. and closes at 7:30 p.m. The vending area is open 24 hours a day.

Orders will be taken from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

To place your order call:
Extension 3663

Please allow 45 minutes from the time you place your order until delivery to your room. Thank you!
Breakfast Menu

Served from 7 AM to 6:30 PM

**Fruits and Juices (15 grams Carb each)**
- Sliced Peaches
- Apple Juice
- Melon
- Orange Juice
- Banana
- Cranberry Juice **
- Prune Juice

**Breakfast Breads**
- Cracked Wheat, White or Raisin Toast (15 grams Carb)
- Banana or Blueberry Muffin (25 grams Carb)

*Sweet Pastry or Bagel (40 grams Carb)*

**From the Grill**
- French Toast or Pancakes -2 (15 grams Carb each)
  *(with syrup)*

- Crisp Bacon (2 slices, regular diet only)
- Sausage Pattie

**Cereals**
- (15 grams Carb unless noted)
- Cream of Wheat
- Oatmeal
- Cheerios, Cornflakes
- Raisin Bran Flakes (23 grams carb)
- Wheaties, All Bran,
- Rice Krispies

**Eggs and**
- Scrambled Eggs
- Egg Substitute
- Omelet
- Cheese Omelet
- Cottage Cheese
- Yogurt (15 grams Carb)

**Beverages**
- Coffee or Tea (Regular or Decaf)
- Cocoa* Lemonade*
- Iced Tea Milk of your Choice (12 grams carb)

Items designated with an asterisk (*) may be omitted or altered if you are on a restricted diet. To assist the diabetic in making their selections, the approximate carbohydrate content is listed next to major food groups. The order taker will monitor the exact amount of carbohydrate in your meal and recommend changes as needed.

For individuals on an anticoagulant, warfarin/Coumadin, the goal is to keep foods with Vitamin K consistent in your diet, not to avoid them completely. If you have a regular diet with green vegetables, you can continue eating them during your stay. If you are not use to green vegetables in your diet, they should not be added during your stay. Foods high in Vitamin K are identified with a double asterisk (**) on your menu tray ticket.
# Lunch or Dinner Menu
Served from 11 AM until 6:30 PM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Soups</strong></th>
<th><strong>Salads</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable Beef</td>
<td>Crisp Garden Salad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Broth</td>
<td>(French, Thousand Island)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearty Chicken Noodle (15 grams Carb)</td>
<td>Ranch, Italian Dressings*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream Soup of the Day (15 grams Carb)</td>
<td>Low Sodium Cream Soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Sodium Chicken Noodle Soup</td>
<td>Low Sodium Chicken Noodle Soup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Lighter Fare and Create your Own Sandwich
Choice of breads: cracked wheat, country white bread (15 grams Carb/slice) or croissant (30 grams Carb)

- Chicken or Tuna Salad (with lettuce & tomato)
- Deli Roast Turkey or Deli Roast Beef (with lettuce & tomato)
- Grilled Cheese Sandwich on bread of your choice
- Hamburger or Cheeseburger
- Seasonal Fruit & Cottage Cheese Plate (30 grams Carb)

Plus: Baked Potato Chips or French Fries (15 grams of Carb)

- Lettuce, Tomato, Onion, Pickle

## For Those with a Heartier Appetite

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macaroni &amp; Cheese (30 grams Carb)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baked Salmon Fillet seasoned w/lemon and dill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tender Roast Beef *w/gravy (5 grams Carb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Roast Beef Sandwich (15 grams Carb/slice of bread)*w/gravy (5 grams Carb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roast Turkey &amp; gravy (5 grams Carb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Turkey Sandwich (15 grams Carb/slice of bread)*w/gravy (5 grams Carb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Stir Fry Vegetables, with or without chicken (5 grams Carb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grilled Chicken Breast or Grilled Pork Chop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fettuccini Alfredo with Vegetables, with or without chicken, (25 grams Carb)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baked Potato, Rice, or Mashed potatoes (15 grams Carb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And Green beans**, Broccoli** or Carrots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Served on request: Dinner Roll (15 grams Carb)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Special of the Day
Ask the order taker what the specials of the day are. They change every day.

- Pizza Fresh From Our Oven
Sausage or Cheese Pizza (40 grams Carb)
And of Course, Dessert
*Fresh Baked Sugar Cookies (30 grams Carb)  *Apple Crisp (25 grams Carb)
Fresh Fruit (15 grams Carb)        *Lemon Meringue Pie (50 grams Carb)
*Orange Sherbet, Vanilla or Chocolate *Ice Cream (25 grams Carb)

Plus Beverages
*Coffee or Tea (regular or decaf)  *Cocoa  *Soft Drink
*Lemonade   Ice Tea    *Milk of your Choice(12 grams Carb)  *Milkshake(40 grams Carb)

Full Liquid Menu
Apple Juice   Orange Juice
Cranberry Juice**

Cream of Wheat    Chicken Broth
Strained Cream Soup

Pudding
Custard (Plain or with caramel sauce)
Milkshake or Sherbet Shake
High Calorie, High Protein Drink
Orange Sherbet, Fruit Ice
Vanilla or Chocolate Ice Cream

Cocoa
Milk of your Choice
Iced Tea w/Lemon Wedge
Fountain Soft Drink
Coffee or Tea (Regular or decaf)

Clear Liquid Menu
Apple Juice   Cranberry Juice
Jell-o    Popsicle
Fruit Ice
Chicken Broth
High Calorie, High Protein Drink
Coffee or Tea (regular or decaf)
Fountain Soft Drink
Lemonade
Iced Tea
Marketing of Lower Sodium Diets

- **Signs:** St. Joseph’s Hospital has many signs throughout their cafeteria that promote healthy eating and living. They include information on calories in beverages, physical activities, promotion of fruits and vegetables, and information on my plate.

Education

- **Label Reading Classes:** These classes have been presented at numerous venues including: Highland High School classes, Highland TOPS support group, Highland Garden Club, and Edwardsville Public Library. These classes have discussed overall nutrition information and tips on reading labels and the importance of reducing sodium. Other groups such as the food pantry, nursing homes and assisted living centers are being approached as well. Pre-and post-tests are given to all participants.

- **Bulletin Board:** A bulletin board was developed by high school students who are interested in future health careers. This education highlights sodium content on commonly-eaten food. Poster boards were also developed that can be used at health fairs.

- **Announcements:** In the Know (ITK) announcements from the Dietary Department highlight more nutrition and sodium information. Pre-and post-tests were also given to staff using this tool.

- **Farmer’s Markets:** Dietary staff is scheduled to attend farmer’s markets and distribute information in regards to sodium. Samples of Mrs. Dash will also be distributed to attendees.

Food Offerings

- **Labeling:** Some labeling has been provided for items in the vending machine. Nutrition information is also provided on all foods in the hot food line.
Sodium Pre-test (students)
1. Which sports drink has the most amount of sodium in it?
   ___ Propel  ___ Gatorade  ___ Powerade

2. Regardless of age, someone who has high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, or is African-American should limit their daily intake of sodium to 1500 mgs:
   ___ True  ___ False

3. The food most frequently eaten by college students is:
   ___ McDonald’s French fries  ___ Ramen noodles  ___ ice cream

4. A single ½ cup serving of most Campbell’s soups contains how many milligrams of sodium?
   ___ <800 mgs  ___ >800 mgs

5. The average high school student consumes about ___ mgs of sodium each day:
   ___ 1-2000 mgs  ___ 3-4000 mgs  ___ 5-6000 mgs

Sodium Post-test (students)
1. Which sports drink has the most amount of sodium in it?
   ___ Propel  ___ Gatorade  ___ Powerade

2. Regardless of age, someone who has high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, or is African-American should limit their daily intake of sodium to 1500 mgs:
   ___ True  ___ False

3. The food most frequently eaten by college students is:
   ___ McDonald’s French fries  ___ Ramen noodles  ___ ice cream

4. A single ½ cup serving of most Campbell’s soups contains how many milligrams of sodium?
   ___ <800 mgs  ___ >800 mgs

5. The average high school student consumes about ___ mgs of sodium each day:
   ___ 1-2000 mgs  ___ 3-4000 mgs  ___ 5-6000 mgs
Sodium Pre-test (adults)
1. According to the 2010 Dietary Guidelines, people over the age of 51 should reduce sodium intake to:
   ___2000 mgs   ___2400 mgs   ___1500 mgs   ___1000 mgs

2. Regardless of age, someone who has high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic kidney disease or is African-American should limit their daily intake of sodium to 1500 mgs:
   ___True   ___False

3. The food most frequently eaten by college students is:
   ___McDonald’s French fries   ___Ramen noodles   ___Ice cream

4. Sea salt contains less sodium than regular table salt and is better for you:
   ___True   ___False

Sodium Post-test
1. According to the 2010 Dietary Guidelines, people over the age of 51 should reduce sodium intake to:
   ___2000 mgs   ___2400 mgs   ___1500 mgs   ___1000 mgs

2. Regardless of age, someone who has high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic kidney disease or is African-American should limit their daily intake of sodium to 1500 mgs:
   ___True   ___False

3. The food most frequently eaten by college students is:
   ___McDonald’s French fries   ___Ramen noodles   ___Ice cream

4. Sea salt contains less sodium than regular table salt and is better for you:
   ___True   ___False
Are you 51 or older, or do you have diabetes, high blood pressure, chronic kidney disease, or are African-American? According to the 2010 Dietary Guidelines, if you can say "yes" to any of this, then you should limit your sodium intake to 1500 milligrams (mgs) a day.

How much is this in 'real life' terms? A teaspoon of salt contains about 2300 to 2400 mgs of sodium, depending on how fine or coarse the crystals are. If you fall into any of the categories targeted for restriction, this means limiting your salt intake to about two-thirds of a teaspoon. This includes the sodium that naturally occurs in food, the salt that is added to packaged and convenience foods, and what is added during cooking or at the table. Most adults in the US consume about 3000 to 4000 mgs each day, making this recommendation roughly half of what our taste buds are accustomed to.

To determine how much sodium is in your diet, look at the Nutrition Facts panel on all packaged foods in your pantry, refrigerator, and freezer. Find the manufacturer's serving size (under the words 'Nutrition Facts'), note how many mgs of sodium are contained in a single serving (ignore the '% daily value' for this calculation), then do the math for the number of servings you're eating.

Consumers often confuse a manufacturer-determined serving size with what they assume is a reasonable serving. Let's use ramen noodles, the food most commonly consumed by college students, as an example. According to the manufacturer, a single package of ramen contains two or three servings, depending on the brand; each serving contains about 800 to 1300 mgs of sodium. If you eat the whole package, you've consumed more sodium than the 1500 mgs recommended for the targeted population and possibly more than what's recommended for adults not falling in these categories: 2400 mgs.

We acquire our taste for salt based on the foods in our environment--what we're exposed to from childhood and continuing into adulthood. We can temper this 'salt tooth' by simply choosing to eat less. Reduce (better yet, eliminate) packaged and processed foods in your diet and eat out less often. Prepare and eat more meals at home. Gradually train your taste buds to enjoy the real flavor of food, not just the flavor of salt. Use one less shake of salt, cut the ramen noodle flavor packet in half, visit the fast food restaurant one less time each week. One bite at a time, one step at a time--one day closer to a healthier life. You can do this.
Is sea salt better for you than regular salt? When it comes to increasing the risk for high blood pressure, compromised kidney function, and congestive heart failure due to excessive intake, the answer is a resounding, “No!”

All salt is 'sea’ salt, if we remember that the Earth was once covered with sea water. All salt, or sodium chloride, is approximately 40% sodium and 60% chloride. All salt contains other trace minerals, such as iron, zinc, iodine, and selenium, to name a few.

The origin of a particular salt (a beach in Hawai‘i or a salt mine under Detroit) will determine the trace mineral content, affecting the flavor and color of a particular salt. Table salt (like Morton) is more processed than sea salt. It is bleached and contains a man-made anti-caking agent, sodium aluminosilicate and comes with or without added iodine. Sea salt sometimes contains naturally occurring minerals, like calcium carbonate or magnesium carbonate, to reduce caking. These additions will also impact flavor.

Most grains of table salt are the same size—a teaspoon of Morton salt weighs the same as a teaspoon of a generic brand and contains the same amount of sodium, about 2300 mgs. Sea salts, on the other hand, can vary greatly in size, from fine Celtic crystals to coarse ala‘e salt from Kaua‘i. A teaspoon of these two will vary in the number of sodium crystals contained in that teaspoon, but **gram for gram, they contain the same amount of sodium.**

Does sea salt taste better? Is it worth the higher cost? Would paying $8/pound (or more) for sea salt, instead of $.89/pound (or less) for Morton help you to use less? Go in with friends and buy small quantities of different kinds of sea salt, start experimenting with the foods you add salt to, do taste tests—this will help you become more aware of the amount of any kind of salt you use, and hopefully help reduce your intake.

Be aware that as you expand your capacity to detect subtle flavor differences, excessive consumption of sea salt and table salt are equal in their potential for negatively impacting your health. If you are African-American, have diabetes, high blood pressure, or chronic kidney disease, or are 51 or older, limit consumption to 1500 mgs of sodium or less each day. Not in any of these categories? The recommendation is to keep consumption to less than 2300 mgs each day.

One less teaspoon of salt added to that pot of beans, one more juicy peach instead of a bag of salty chips—one day at a time, one bite at a time, you can do this.
Marketing of Lower Sodium Diets

- **Signs**: There are signs in the cafeteria promoting local produce. These are located near the salad bar where more local produce is being used.

Education

- **Food Preparation Class**: SMGS Dieticians developed an education class on food preparation and meal planning for home care workers in the region. The classes taught them how to better meet the dietary needs of clients by showing them how to purchase and prepare low sodium meals for those they serve. Over 550 homemakers were educated at these classes.

- **Health Coaches**: The hospital dieticians worked with the hospital’s chronic disease management program’s health coaches to teach patients how to plan healthy meals at home. An educational binder for patients has been developed and will be distributed to those patients who require more information on sodium.

- **Booths**: Through a partnership with the corporate wellness program, Live Well, a nutrition education booth was located in the cafeterias. The booth included salt tubes. The hospital will also be providing a blood pressure monitoring booth. Employees will also be able to find education materials on lower sodium diets. The community will also be invited to use the blood pressure monitoring booth.

Food Offerings

- **Local Produce**: More local seasonal produce is being used in the cafeterias. Partnerships were created with local food cooperatives and farmers markets to help provide more fresh produce.

- **Labeling**: Labeling is currently being done on all items in the cafeteria. These will be presented in an area where they will most visible.

- **Spices**: A salt-free spice blend is given to patients on a sodium restricted diet to use throughout their admission along with a recipe and an explanation on how to use it at home. The spice blend recipe is available in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Nutrition Care Manual.

- **Recipes**: Healthy recipes have been researched and will be used in the cafeteria. Work has been done to include several low-sodium soups.
TRY OUR OVEN ROASTED EGGPLANT ON YOUR WRAP OR SANDWICH TODAY!

Eggplants purchased from our Local community coop

Recipe

Directions:

Slice eggplant into ¼” slices

Place on baking pan and brush with olive oil

Sprinkle with small amount of salt

Roast in oven at 400F. just until slightly browned

Cut the egg plants into strips (not too thick)

Can be served on the deli bar for sandwiches / wraps
THIS FRUIT BASKET CONTAINS
ONLY ITEMS purchased from
THE MT. VERNON COMMUNITY COOP

WE ARE PROUD TO SERVE
ITEMS FROM THE MT. VERNON
NEIGHBORHOOD COMMUNITY
COOP:
The Spinach tortillas and
Tomato Herb tortillas
have been
Purchased through our
Neighborhood Community Coop

The Granola topping has
Been purchased from
Our Neighborhood Community Coop
Salem Township Hospital
Contact: Julie Brueggemann, Director of Nutritional Services and Registered Dietician, 618-548-3194

Marketing of Lower Sodium Diets
- **Brochures:** An education board is located outside the cafeteria with brochures on nutrition. Handouts include: pleasing your palate, eat like an Olympian, super 7 foods, whole grains, seasoning your food, and fruits. Information on salt-free seasonings is also being distributed to patients and their families. A sodium table was also set up during the Kidney Mobile’s visit.
- **Signs:** On each table in the cafeteria, a sign describing salt intake is located for employees and patients to read.

Education
- **Orientation:** During orientation for new hires, dietary staff gives a short overview of the cafeteria and their offerings during the lunch hour. The logos used are also explained as well as the effort to reduce sodium intake. A “Why Sodium” PowerPoint is presented to the new hires as well. All participants were given a pre-and post-test to evaluate their knowledge during the course. In July, the pre-test had a correct response rate of 67% and the post-test had a correct response rate of 92%.
- **Supermarket Tours:** Two tours of the supermarket were given to individuals from the community. There were 17 people that participated and they took both pre- and post-tests. The pre-test had a correct response rate of 70% and the post-test had a correct response rate of 92%. Each individual learned more about sodium, overall nutrition information and what to buy at the store through these tours.
- **Chef:** A chef is coming to the annual community health fair to provide education on cooking with herbs and spices as a way to reduce sodium in the diet. The chef will also work with staff on ways to reduce sodium in foods for hospital employees and patients.

Food Offerings
- **Labeling:** Icons are placed by foods on the menu. They show fit, controlled sodium, superfoods, and vegetarian food choices. The salt packet container labels the sodium in each packet.
- **Water:** To promote more water and less soda consumption, employees were encouraged to sign a water pledge with the goal being to reduce sodium in their drinks every day. Over 180 employees signed this pledge. A reusable cup was given to employees who signed the pledges.
- **Herbs and Spices:** A conference room was used to promote herbs and spices throughout the day. Employees were able to view and smell fresh herbs and get more information on how to cook with them.
The Importance of H2O

Quick Facts About Water:
- Water makes up 55-70% of your physical mass.
- It is the transport canal for life giving nutrients and oxygen.
- Water is essential to flush out toxins produced constantly in our body.
- It helps to regulates body temperature. That is why when you are feeling hot, water tends to cool you off.
- Is essential in breaking down the food you eat, and converting it into nutrients and energy.
- Acts as a cushions and protects joints and organs.
- Dehydration happens when your body doesn’t get enough water.

Ideally how much water should you drink everyday!
Though the amount can depend on your level of activity and body type, drinking 8 eight ounce glasses of water a day per person is the general guideline for drinking water.

And if you do not like the taste of water
You could try flavoring your water naturally use sugars or unnatural sweeteners. What you can do in a jug of water put in a washed sprig of mint with a squeeze of lemon. Ginger and cucumbers also work.

The other option can be for you to drink organic herb teas or even green tea for that matter as these are loaded with anti-oxidants and have great health benefits.
Quick Facts About Water:

- Water makes up 55-70% of your physical mass.
- It is the transport canal for life giving nutrients and oxygen.
- Water is essential to flush out toxins produced constantly in our body.
- It helps to regulate body temperature. That is why when you are feeling hot, water tends to cool you off.
- It is essential in breaking down the food you eat, and converting it into nutrients and energy.
- Acts as a cushion and protects joints and organs.
- Dehydration happens when your body doesn’t get enough water.

In an attempt to lower the sodium in my diet, I pledge to drink more water as the alternative source of hydration. I will increase my consumption of water to a goal of 64 ounces per day.
**Fresh Herbs**

**MINT**
Use to garnish sweets or stir into lemonade.

**BAY LEAVES**
Flavor soups and stews with whole leaves, remove before serving.

**ROSEMARY**
Use whole sprigs to make a marinade for beef.

**BASIL**
Add to a simmering pasta sauce just before serving.

**OREGANO**
Sprinkle into tomato sauce destined for a pizza.

**DILL**
Add a bunch to homemade chicken soup.

**CILANTRO**
Kicks up fresh or bottled salsa.

**THYME**
Combine with flour for dredging poultry.

**PARSLEY**
Mix into bread crumbs as a coating for chicken or fish.

**SAGE**
The strong flavor stands up well in beef and pork dishes.

**CHIVES**
Mash into batter and melt over roasted potatoes.