



# healthy living

## Cooking with Herbs and Spices

**Enjoy great taste without salt.** Seasoning with herbs, spices, and vinegars is a healthy way to enjoy great taste without salt. Would you like to reduce the sodium in your diet without giving up flavor? You're not alone!

Heart disease and stroke are linked to high levels of sodium in the diet. Research has shown that limiting sodium is important for good health. Current recommendations are to keep sodium intake to no more than 2,300 mg per day. Experiment with herbs, spices, and vinegars and let your taste buds be your guide.

### Herbs and wine vinegar

**Wine vinegars:** These are excellent flavor boosters. Try them as a seasoning for vegetables such as cabbage, green beans, cauliflower, and broccoli. A dash will do wonders for steaks, chops, and fish. They are also excellent in homemade salad dressings.

**Herb vinegars:** Heat vinegar in an enamel pan, then pour it into a vinegar bottle and add one or several herbs (to taste). Any type of vinegar may be used, depending on personal taste. Do not let the vinegar boil. Let the mixture rest for 2 weeks before using.



### Herb blends to replace salt

Many salt-free seasoning mixtures are available in your supermarket. It's also very simple to make your own, using the recipes provided on the back of this page. These can be placed in shakers and used instead of salt. Store in air-tight glass containers. Label well. Add some uncooked rice grains to prevent caking.

Potassium-based "salt substitutes" provide a "salty" taste to foods with less sodium than table salt. However, these may not be a good choice for people with certain health conditions, such as diabetes, heart or kidney disease, or those taking certain blood pressure medications. Check with your doctor or registered dietitian to find out if these products are right for you.



## What goes with what

**SOUP** Bay leaf, chervil, tarragon, marjoram, parsley, savory, rosemary.

**POULTRY** Garlic, oregano, rosemary, savory, sage.

**BEEF** Bay leaf, chives, cloves, cumin, garlic, hot pepper, marjoram, rosemary, savory.

**LAMB** Garlic, marjoram, oregano, rosemary, thyme. (Before roasting, make little slits in lamb and insert herbs.)

**PORK** Coriander, cumin, garlic, ginger, hot pepper, pepper, sage, savory, thyme.

**CHEESE** Basil, chervil, chives, curry, dill, fennel, garlic chives, marjoram, oregano, parsley, sage, thyme.

**FISH** Chervil, dill, fennel, tarragon, garlic, parsley, thyme.

**FRUIT** Anise, cinnamon, coriander, cloves, ginger, mint.

**BREAD** Caraway, marjoram, oregano, poppy seed, rosemary, thyme.

**VEGETABLES** Basil, chervil, chives, dill, tarragon, marjoram, mint, parsley, pepper, thyme.

**SALADS** Basil, chives, tarragon, garlic chives, parsley, sorrel. (These are best used fresh or added to salad dressing. Otherwise, use herb vinegars for extra flavor.)

## Herb combinations

Herbs can be combined to enhance specific foods. Try these herb combinations for:

**EGGS** Basil, dill, parsley.

**FISH** Basil, bay leaf (crumbled), tarragon, lemon, thyme, parsley.

**POULTRY** Marjoram (two parts), sage (three parts).

**SALADS** Basil, parsley, tarragon

**TOMATO SAUCE** Basil, bay leaf, marjoram, oregano, parsley.

**VEGETABLES** Basil, parsley, savory.

**ITALIAN SEASONING** Basil, marjoram, oregano, rosemary, sage, savory, thyme.

**BARBEQUE SEASONING** Cumin, garlic, hot pepper, oregano.

**FINE HERBS** Parsley, chervil, chives, tarragon (sometimes adding a small amount of basil, fennel, oregano, sage, or saffron).

**BOUQUET GARNI MIXTURES** Bay, parsley (two parts), thyme. The herbs may be wrapped in cheesecloth. Or you can wrap fresh parsley.

### Saltless Surprise

- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. basil
- 1 tsp. oregano
- 1 tsp. powdered lemon rind or dehydrated lemon juice

Put the ingredients into a blender and mix well.

### Spicy Saltless Seasoning

- 1 tsp. pepper
- 2 tsp. paprika
- 1 Tbsp. rosemary

Mix ingredients in a blender.

### Pungent Salt Substitute

- 3 tsp. basil
- 2 tsp. savory (summer savory is best)
- 2 tsp. ground cumin seed
- 2 tsp. celery seed
- 2 tsp. sage
- 2 tsp. marjoram
- 1 tsp. lemon thyme

Mix well and then crush to a fine powder with a mortar and pestle.

These recipes use dried herbs. If you use fresh herbs, more will be needed; adjust quantities to taste.



### Additional resources

For more information, tools, classes, and other resources:

- Search [kp.org/mydoctor](https://www.kp.org/mydoctor)
- Contact your local Health Education Department