



SYSCO Food Services of Montana

January - March, 2008

Acting

Today

for the
Sake of

Tomorrow

Sodium

There has been a lot of news lately about the health concerns of too much sodium and should the government regulate the food manufacturers. I want to share some information from a Rutgers study and show how SYSCO can assist you. Too much sodium may contribute to the development of high blood pressure. This can then affect the function of the kidneys, heart and may lead to a stroke. Sodium is a necessary mineral to keep our bodies running. It keeps our nerves & muscles functioning, helps with the absorption of major nutrients and maintaining adequate water and mineral balance. We can't do without it, so how much is the right amount? The recommendation is 1000-3000 mg / daily. You can meet this by eating a healthy, well balanced diet. Sodium is found naturally in meats, nuts, grains, vegetables, fruits and dairy in low amounts. Some food manufacturers add sodium to foods for preserving, processing and flavor enhancing. These chemical additives are also sodium – sodium nitrate, sodium benzoate saccharin and MSG. Many of us consume three to five times what is needed without realizing it. Foods high in sodium – food in brine, pickles, sauerkraut, olives; bacon, lunch and processed meats such as franks, sausage, ham; snack items like chips, salted crackers and nuts; ready to eat cereals and spices with salt like celery and garlic salt. Foods low in sodium – fresh vegetables and salads; homemade soup; oatmeal; eggs; pasta, and nitrate free meats. As we age, our taste buds change and many of the elderly need the added flavor enhancers to encourage them to eat. So how do we control sodium intake, yet have great tasting meals for the residents? The SYSCO menu program does this for you. It has recipes, products to use and diet spreadsheets with portion sizes for all diet needs. The nutritional values, including sodium, are also listed for each meal. For those creating their own menus, using the lower sodium and salt free ingredients SYSCO stocks will help. Many manufacturers already provide great low salt, quality products. Some of these are: Soup bases – meat first with no added MSG and creaming that's low sodium. Some breads

Going Green

Livingston Memorial Hospital recently joined the 2007 *Montana Farm to Restaurant Campaign*. Livingston Memorial is the only Montana Hospital participating in the effort at this time. The *Montana Farm to Restaurant Campaign* was established to publicize the story behind local people, products, and services involving food—and to encourage the consumption of nutritious and healthy foods. "Our hospital menu should serve as a role model for the community, serving nutritious meals using sustainable foods just makes sense" said Jessica Wilcox, MS, RD, LDN, and Food & Nutrition Services Manager for Livingston Memorial Hospital. "I want to ensure that our patients, staff and guests get healthy, nutrient dense, fresh food. This is something that's important to our organization and to me personally." The hospital cafeteria has also recently started a sustainability committee in order to encourage other departments to go "green". Wilcox purchases many sustainable items for the hospital, such as biodegradable/compost-able paper products, and regionally produced food items from SYSCO FOOD SERVICES OF MONTANA. Some of the regionally produced items they are using from SYSCO MONTANA include: Darigold Milk - Bozeman, Wheat Montana Bread - Three Forks, Daily's Bacon - Missoula and various Redneck Brand products - Kalispell. A few of the eco-friendly products they have started using include: molded fiber paper plates, bamboo single compartment containers and clear clamshell containers, and drink cups made from corn. They also made the switch to the SYSCO Earth Plus Napkins which contain over 90 percent post consumer content. Contact your Relationship Manager for more information on regionally produced and sustainable earth friendly items available through SYSCO FOOD SERVICES OF MONTANA.

Josh Wood