

SODIUM IN THE DORCHESTER MUNICIPAL DRINKING WATER SUPPLY

Samples taken from the Dorchester Municipal Water System over the last several years indicate that sodium levels in the drinking water remain in the range of 20 mg/L to 40 mg/L. The objective for sodium in drinking water is 200 mg/L. However, when the sodium levels are higher than 20 mg/L, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care recommends that the Medical Officer of Health take measures to inform **persons on sodium restricted diets** so they can control their sodium intake.

This is a bacteriologically safe water supply. Drinking up to two litres of water per day would contribute approximately 78 milligrams of sodium to a person's diet. For healthy adults, this sodium level in drinking water **does not pose a risk**. Health Canada recommends adults consume 1200 – 1500 mg of sodium per day, depending on age. However, for people on very strict, strict or moderate sodium restricted diets, the amount of sodium in the water may be significant. (See chart below.)

Your body needs sodium in order to maintain blood pressure, control fluid levels and for normal nerve and muscle function. Food products, not water, are the major source of sodium in our diets. It is also found in drugs such as antacids, laxatives, aspirin and cough medicines, as well as table salt. One teaspoon of table salt contains 2300 mg of sodium.

For a healthy adult, the level of sodium in the water supply does not pose a risk to health. If you have been identified by your physician as having kidney disease, heart disease, high blood pressure or liver disease, and have to restrict your sodium intake, please consult your physician. The chart shows the contribution sodium in your drinking water might play for those on various levels of sodium restricted diets and the amount of sodium obtained from your drinking water if it was at 40 mg/L of sodium.

Sodium-restricted Diet Summary*

	Maximum intake of sodium allowed per day	Amount of sodium in 2L of drinking water
Very Strict Diet	500 mg/day	80 mg/day
Strict Diet	1000 mg/day	80 mg/day
Moderate Diet	2000 mg/day	80 mg/day
Mild Diet	3000 mg/day	80 mg/day

* Sodium-restricted diets may be defined differently. If you are on a sodium-restricted diet, follow your health care provider's guidance about the amount of sodium that is recommended for you.

If you have any questions about sodium in your drinking water, please consult your physician, call the Middlesex-London Health Unit, Environmental Health Team, Ext. 2300, or call Eat Right Ontario toll-free at 1-877-510-5102.