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Sodium in Drinking Water

Sodium is an electrolyte and essential nutrient for human physiological function.

How does it end up in drinking water?

Groundwater from areas with natural underground salt deposits

Treatment that uses sodium-based systems like water softeners or ion exchange

High use of road salt

Saltwater intrusion in areas close to saltwater bodies

Are there regulations about sodium in drinking water?

Public Water Systems

REGULATED BY THE SDWA

The EPA recommends a limit of **20 mg/L** for municipal water supplies for sodium under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA).

This guideline is not enforced, and municipalities are not required to report sodium levels.

Private Water Systems

NOT-REGULATED BY THE SDWA

Homeowners are responsible for testing and treatment of water. Levels are affected by local geology and water table conditions.

Water softeners are a common treatment for hard well water and can increase sodium levels

Sodium in Drinking Water: Public and Private Systems

Recommended Daily Sodium Intake

Includes drinking water and food:

2,300 mg/day
per day for individuals aged 14 & older

<1,500 mg/day
for individuals with cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, and kidney disease

Sodium content of common foods

1 egg	**71 mg**
6 oz. of plain yogurt	**119 mg**
1 slice of bread	**146 mg**
1 hot dog	**567 mg**

Potential health concerns from excess sodium include:

- Cardiovascular problems
- Hypertension
- Kidney disease
- Pre-exisiting conditions that require a low sodium diet

Concerned about your sodium levels?

Talk to your doctor if you have concerns about your daily sodium intake and consider testing your drinking water. Reverse osmosis can be used to reduce sodium in household water.

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For full list of references visit: https://www.wellwater.bse.vt.edu/files/Sodium-Drinking-Water_Infographic_References.pdf

Virginia Household Water Quality Program

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