

IN A NUTSHELL

NEWS FROM THE PEANUT BUREAU OF CANADA

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the **shakedown** on sodium and peanuts

Recently, 17 of Canada's leading health groups and professional associations joined forces to urge the food industry to reduce sodium levels in its products. Reducing dietary sodium is a key measure in reducing the risk for and managing high blood pressure. It is estimated that one million Canadians have high blood pressure caused by excess dietary sodium.

Organizations working to reduce Canadians' sodium consumption include Blood Pressure Canada, the Canadian Stroke Network, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, Canadian Medical Association, Canadian Diabetes Association, Canadian Public Health Association, and Dietitians of Canada.

The daily recommended intake for sodium is no more than 2300 milligrams. Yet, according to Statistics Canada, Canadians' sodium consumption averages well over 3000 milligrams per day – or 30 per cent more than the maximum. There are, however, many tasty food and snacking choices that are low in sodium – some which may come as a surprise to consumers.

“A common misconception is that peanuts and peanut butter are high in sodium,” says registered dietitian Sue Mah. “The reality is that a Food Guide Serving (4 tbsp or 60 mL) of unsalted peanuts is sodium-free. And peanut butter contains much less sodium than you think.”

In fact, the vast majority of peanut butter available in Canada contains less than 140 milligrams of sodium per stated serving, and is actually considered 'low in sodium' by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the public organization that governs food labelling. All-natural and no-salt-added peanut butter contain no sodium at all.

Peanuts and peanut butter provide more than a dozen different nutrients including protein, B vitamins, folate, fibre, vitamin E and magnesium. Plus, peanuts are cholesterol-free and gluten-free.

As for salted peanuts, according to the Canadian Nutrient File, (the standard reference food composition database reporting the amount of nutrients in foods commonly consumed in Canada) salted, oil-roasted peanuts contain 117 milligrams of sodium per Food Guide Serving (4 tbsp or 60 mL) – that's less sodium than you'll find in a slice of bread or a bagel.

Salt-conscious Canadians should choose the lower-sodium versions of all foods. Fresh or frozen vegetables, fruit, unsalted peanuts and peanut butter are wholesome, nutritious, healthy choices. Additional information on the nutritional benefits of peanuts and peanut butter can be found by visiting www.peanutbureau.ca.

spicy peanut butter spread

This flavourful blend of peanut butter and peppers is a tasty complement to a vegetable tray.

INGREDIENTS:

2 tbsp (30 mL)	lime juice
1 cup (250 mL)	salsa
1 cup (250 mL)	peanut butter
1/4 cup (50 mL)	chopped red pepper
1/4 cup (50 mL)	chopped yellow pepper

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a blender, whirl lime juice, salsa and peanut butter until mixture is smooth.
2. Spoon mixture into a small bowl and fold in chopped peppers. Cover and refrigerate.

Yield 2 cups (500 ml)

NUTRITION PER SERVING: 101 calories; 4.8 g protein; 3.8 g carbohydrates; 8.3 g fat (1.4 g saturated); 0 mg cholesterol; 1.3 g fiber; 121.2 mg sodium.



PROFILE

Peanut Bureau of Canada

If you are looking for the latest news and health information related to peanuts, turn to the Canadian experts. Established in 1999, the Peanut Bureau of Canada is an information office dedicated to educating Canadian health care professionals and consumers about peanuts and peanut products as part of a healthy diet.

It is the Canadian information office of the American Peanut Council, a non-profit trade association that serves as a forum for all segments of the United States' peanut industry.

Did you know that peanuts and peanut butter are popular items in Canada - the average Canadian eats 2.7 kg per year! Plus, more than 70 per cent of the peanuts consumed in Canada are grown in the United States. As the largest importer of American peanuts, Canada is a crucial market for the U.S. That's why the Peanut Bureau of Canada was established.

To learn more about the versatility, taste and health benefits of peanuts – and to find a selection of delicious recipes – visit www.peanutbureau.ca, send us an e-mail at info@peanutbureau.ca or call **416-968-7311** x 240.

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

Feel free to contact us at info@peanutbureau.ca with any questions or feedback you may have about this issue of **IN A NUTSHELL**.





The Peanut Bureau of Canada is dedicated to providing helpful educational materials about the causes and management of food allergies.

Dr. Janice Joneja is a researcher, educator, author, and clinical counsellor with thirty years of experience in the area of biochemical and immunological reactions involved in food allergy and intolerance. She holds a Ph.D. in medical microbiology and immunology, and has been a member of the academic faculty of the University of British Columbia and other universities. Here is an excerpt from her book: **Dealing with Food Allergies in Babies and Children**, Bull Publishing Company, October 2007.

precautions for the anaphylactic child in school

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hen the child is old enough to be on their own in school, the risks for accidental exposure to their allergenic foods are increased enormously – as are the fears and concerns of the child’s parents and care-givers! The only real protection a parent can give the child is education and awareness – both on the part of the child, and the teachers, staff and other school personnel who have the temporary care of the child. If the child is old enough to be in school, he or she is old enough to understand the risks involved in their food allergy, and measures they must take to ensure their own safety.

However, the watchwords for any allergic child should be – “be careful, not fearful!” Fear is a negative, detrimental emotion that can lead to hiding from life and its challenges; care implies a positive, “in control”, “I can handle it attitude”, which is what we all want to encourage in our children. It is the latter that in the end will keep your child safe.

Education of the people who have temporary care of the food-allergic child, is equally important to the child’s well-being. More and more schools are becoming aware of the risks that the food-allergic child is exposed to, and many have protocols in place to deal with their allergic students, in a food-allergen safe environment. Talk to your child’s teacher and principal, especially if the child is just starting school, or is moving to a new school. Make sure that the following guidelines can be implemented.

Important measures for a food-allergen-safe environment should include:

- Education of the allergic child about avoiding being exposed to their allergenic foods including:
 - Being able to recognize the food
 - Knowing how to avoid foods that are likely to contain, or be contaminated by, the food
 - Wearing a MedicAlert or identification tag or bracelet in case of loss of consciousness in an allergic reaction
 - If the child is old enough:
 - Being aware of all terms on food labels that would indicate the possible presence of the food
 - Carrying an EpiPen or similar device, containing injectable epinephrine (adrenalin), and being familiar with its use in case of accidental exposure and an allergic reaction
- Ensuring that all personnel in the facility are well-informed about the dangers to your child in the event of accidental contamination by the allergenic food
- Informing all staff about emergency procedures should your child develop symptoms and require medical treatment. This should include clearly written instructions from you and your child’s doctor on the use of injectable adrenalin and arranging emergency transportation of the child to the nearest medical facility.
- Clear strategies for maintaining the classroom in a safe condition, with rules about cleaning the area, if possible
- Informing everyone entering the child’s classroom to avoid introducing the food into the area, and (most importantly!) the reasons for the restrictions. You need to recruit the help of the other children, not cause them annoyance or incite rebellion against the perceived restrictions to their freedom, which can be counterproductive in ensuring your child’s safety.

For more information or to order a complete copy of Dr. Joneja’s **Dealing with Food Allergies in Babies and Children** please visit http://www.bullpub.com/foodallergies_children.html