

## Shaking the Salt Habit: Use Herbs and Spices for a Flavor Boost!

We often think that sodium (salt) is something that we as adults need to limit, but reducing the amount our kids eat is important, too. Most Americans consume more than we need and over time, too much sodium can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke.

Here at school, we work hard to create nutritious and tasty meals that students enjoy. It's not easy though! Our meals must meet strict USDA nutritional requirements that includes keeping sodium levels in check. Reducing salt while keeping things appealing to students is a challenge, but our foodservice staff has mastered it.

Want in on the secret? **Herbs and spices!** A generous use of herbs and spices help jazz up our USDA-compliant school lunches without exceeding sodium limits or adding fat and calories.

We invite you to give adding herbs and spices a try at home! Adding more spices when you cook at home will add a flavor boost and you'll be reaching for the saltshaker less often.

Here's a few of our favorite herb and spice combinations to give you a start:

Mediterranean	Mexican	Indian
Oregano	Cumin	Cumin
Basil	Cilantro	Coriander
Thyme	Oregano	Turmeric
Rosemary	Cayenne	Ginger
Bay leaf	Chili powder	Cilantro
	Cinnamon	Garam masala

Start with a small amount to keep the food from getting too spicy. You can always taste and add more as you go. Together, let's shake the salt habit and serve kids lower-sodium foods with a flavor boost!



Our **Albondigas Mexicanas (Mexican meatballs)** get dressed up with onion powder, garlic, chili powder and a touch of cayenne, then topped with fresh cilantro.



Our **Creamy Chicken Sabzi** is seasoned with a sauce made from cumin, turmeric, curry powder, and black pepper.



**Adding fresh cilantro to rice or mashed potatoes** gives a pop of color and a fresh taste students love.