

# BRANCATI CENTER BULLETIN



## DEAR NEIGHBORS,

We hope you're enjoying the longer, sunnier days of spring. In this month's bulletin, we wrap up our nutrition series with a look at sodium—where it's found and how much to consume. Our Hot Topic shares tips to lower summer energy bills. We also celebrate Megan Brown's contributions as she steps down from her role as Brancati Center Program Director. We'd love your feedback on the nutrition series and suggestions for future topics. Please email us at [brancaticenter@jhmi.edu](mailto:brancaticenter@jhmi.edu).

—The Brancati Center Team

## HOT TOPICS

### How to Save on Your Energy Bill

With warmer weather and rising living costs, now's a great time to explore ways to save on energy bills.

Maryland's Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) offers several assistance options for eligible households:

- **Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP):** Helps pay a portion of electric bills and offers budget billing to even out monthly payments year-round.
- **Arrearage Retirement Assistance:** Provides up to \$2,000 toward past-due electric and gas bills (minimum \$300 balance required). Available once every five years, with some exceptions.
- **Weatherization & Energy Efficiency Services:** Offered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), these programs improve home efficiency and comfort.

For details and to apply, visit:

- [OHEP](http://OHEP)
- [DHCD Energy Programs](http://DHCD Energy Programs): [http](http://http) or call 1-855-583-8976.

## NUTRITION BASICS: SODIUM

### What is it?

Sodium, a major component of salt, is a mineral required for water balance in the body.

### Where is it found?

Most sodium comes from packaged foods we buy at the grocery store or pre-made meals outside the house. We also eat sodium in the form of table salt that we add to our food.

### Can I have too much sodium?

Eating too much sodium can cause fluid retention and result in high blood pressure, which leads to heart disease and stroke. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends adults eat less than 2300 mg of sodium (1 teaspoon of table salt) per day. It is good to read the nutrition label, as many foods have more sodium than you might think!

### How can I eat less sodium?

(NHLBI, 2013)

The DASH eating plan, which is high in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and low-fat dairy, is also shown to reduce blood pressure and sodium intake.

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size 1 1/2 cup (208g)	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>240</b>
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 4g	<b>5%</b>
Saturated Fat 1.5g	<b>8%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 5mg	<b>2%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 430mg	<b>19%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 46g	<b>17%</b>
Dietary Fiber 7g	<b>25%</b>
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 2g Added Sugars	<b>4%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 11g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 6mg	35%
Potassium 240mg	6%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

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The Johns Hopkins Brancati Center is based in Baltimore, Maryland



Choose More Often:	Choose Less Often:
Grilled or baked chicken and turkey (with skin removed)	Smoked and cured meats such as bacon, ham, sausage, hot dogs, bologna, fatback, ham hocks, scrapple, and liver pudding
Fresh fish or rinsed canned fish such as tuna* or sardines	Canned fish
Low-sodium canned foods	Canned foods packed in broth or salt
Low-sodium or reduced-sodium cheeses	Most cheeses
Low-salt or salt-free chips, nuts, and pretzels	Salty chips, crackers, nuts, popcorn, and pretzels
Plain rice, noodles, or pasta	Quick-cooking rice and noodles
Homemade, low-sodium, or reduced-sodium soups	Regular canned and instant soups
Fresh, frozen, "no-salt-added," or rinsed canned vegetables	Canned vegetables
Spices, herbs, and flavorings such as cilantro, parsley, garlic powder, onion powder, vinegar, and chili powder	Condiments and seasonings such as soy sauce, monosodium glutamate (MSG), fish sauce, bouillon cubes, ketchup, and Cajun seasonings

### What are salt substitutes?

Salt substitutes, like Morton Salt Substitute, are made of potassium chloride instead of sodium chloride. They taste similar and can be used just like table salt. There are also no-salt seasoning and spice blends, like Mrs. Dash, that help you add flavor to your food without adding salt. Discuss with your physician before making substitutions to ensure you are choosing the salt alternative that is safest for you, particularly if you have a history of kidney disease.

### For more information click on the links below

[Johns Hopkins \(low sodium diet for high blood pressure\)](#).

[NHLBI \(tips to reduce salt and sodium\)](#).

[NHLBI \(DASH eating plan\)](#).

## Tuggle Award



Please join us in congratulating Brandon Sumida on receiving the 2025 Tuggle Award! As an anesthesia resident, he's empowering youth through STEM and healthcare exposure—from hands-on workshops at Dunbar P-TECH to launching a scholarship in honor of his mother. His work is shaping the future of medicine and equity.



## Spotlight: Megan Brown



In March, we bid farewell to our beloved Program Director, Megan Brown, whose leadership, fiscal expertise, and unwavering dedication have profoundly shaped the Brancati Center for the Advancement of Community Care.

Through her thoughtful stewardship, she strengthened the Center's operations and finances, expanded its reach, and built enduring partnerships that advanced community health. She could always be depended on to do whatever was needed—whether leading strategic initiatives or handling day-to-day details—with grace, reliability, and heart. We especially admire how she helped us carry forward the legacy of Dr. Fred Brancati, honoring his spirit of compassion, collaboration, and service. As she moves on to an exciting new opportunity, we offer heartfelt thanks and our warmest wishes.