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In accordance with the American Heart Association, the recommended daily allowances (RDA) with respect to daily sugar intake for males and females are 36 grams and 24 grams, while salt intake for males and females are 2300 mg and 1500mg. When I first heard about these, I have no idea about how much they mean actually.

On February 25, 2013, I recorded everything I ate the whole day. In the morning, I ate a sandwich which contained a piece of cheddar cheese, a smoked ham and some veggies. So the total food value of the sandwich is about 5g of sugar and 2440mg of sodium. I also drank a cup of chocolate smoothie, which with food value of 90g sugar and 286mg sodium.

In the afternoon, I had a chicken salad as my lunch. It had cucumbers, provolone Cheese, chicken, tomatoes, veggies and some buttermilk ranch on top. Its food value is about 7g of sugar as well as 650mg of sodium.

At about 4:30pm, I ate some Disney fruit crisps, which contained 9g sugar and 0mg sodium. I drank some green tea too. It had 0g sugar and 20mg sodium. Then at around 8pm, I had dinner at Cheesecake Factory. I had a clam chowder (2g sugar and 820mg sodium); a bistro shrimp pasta (3g sugar and 820mg sodium). I had an Original cheesecake as dessert (16g sugar and 430mg sodium), but I just ate half of the cake as I share it with my friend, so it contains about 8g sugar and 215mg sodium.

 After calculating the food value of everything I ate, I totally had 124g of sugar and 5251mg of sodium intake for the whole day. I am really shocked when I noticed it. They both are extraordinary exceeding the recommended daily allowance from the American Heart Association. I thought I have a pretty healthy diet, but I can’t believe I am way too heavy with my diet.

 As most people know, eating too much sugar is not good to our health. For instance, we may have weaker immune system because sugar may cause a lower number of white blood cells that are needed to fight disease causing bacteria; higher rate of bad cholesterol; weight gain, since calorie consumption is proportional to the sugar taken; heart problems and arthritis as a result of obesity; and we may have tooth decay and gum diseases more easily.

Same to sodium, if we eat too much salt, that is definitely not good to our body too. The biggest problem of a high-sodium diet is the effect it has on blood pressure and heart health, such as high blood pressure, heart disease and kidney failure. According to an article *Effects of a high-sodium diet on eHow.com*, “In the body, sodium is processed by the kidneys. However, when a person eats too much sodium, the kidneys cannot process all of it. The excess sodium ends up in the bloodstream. Because the mineral retains water, the volume of blood in the body increases. As a result, the circulatory system has to work harder to pump the blood. Over time, this added strain on the system can result in heart disease and kidney failure”.

 Therefore, we absolutely should have a healthy diet with low sugar and salt. For low sugar diet, it has three main advantages. One is we can have better cholesterol numbers. “A low-sugar diet is associated with higher levels of HDL, or “good” cholesterol, according to an April 2010 news released by the “Journal of the American Medical Association”. People who consume lower levels of added sugar in their diet tended to have higher levels of HDL. Second, we can prevent a slew of diseases, cancers, mental problems, obesity etc. Besides that, we can have a better weight control as well.

How about low salt? The most significant benefit of a low-sodium diet is cardiovascular health. “The system works better when the blood is not full of excess salt, and the smoother the blood is pumping, the easier it is on your heart” (“Effects of a High-Sodium Diet”). That helps translate to better organ health, less natural wear and tear on the system, and as a result have a longer life.

Works Cited

“Effects of a High-Sodium Diet”. eHow.com. Web 26 Feb 2013.

“The Benefits of Going Sugar Free”. Sugar Free Like Me. 30 Jan, 2010. Web. Feb 27, 2013.