# Survey Reveals Over a Third of Children's Restaurant Meals Exceed UK Salt Targets



A recent survey by Action on Salt has revealed that over a third of children's meals in restaurants still contain more than the UK government's maximum salt target of 1.71 grams. Conducted among 37 restaurants, the survey highlighted Gourmet Burger Kitchen, Wetherspoon’s, and Prezzo as having some of the highest salt levels in their children’s dishes.

Specifically, the survey found that 37% of the children's main meals exceeded the salt target. Gourmet Burger Kitchen stood out with children’s meals averaging 3.06 grams of salt per meal, while a particular vegan margherita pizza from Bella Italia reached 4.4 grams of salt.

In contrast, the survey also identified restaurants with meals that maintained low salt contents, such as Subway, which had an average of 0.79 grams of salt in its children's meals. Other low-salt options included Wetherspoon’s tomato and mascarpone pasta and several dishes from Prezzo and Hungry Horse.

Despite some restaurants having individual dishes with low salt content, overall compliance varied significantly across different chains. For instance, Burger King, Ikea, Pret a Manger, Subway, Toby Carvery, and Yo! Sushi successfully kept their entire children's menu below the salt target. Conversely, Gourmet Burger Kitchen had 88% of their menu items exceeding the target.

The findings come in light of existing health guidelines suggesting children aged four to six should consume no more than 3 grams of salt per day, making these excesses particularly concerning for health experts who warn about future risks of high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease.

Some restaurants, including Hungry Horse and Wetherspoon’s, responded by outlining their efforts and questioning the findings, respectively. Hungry Horse noted a 15% reduction in the average salt content since 2019, while Wetherspoon’s indicated a precautionary move toward salt reduction. Bella Italia emphasized its commitment to addressing the salt content while maintaining flavor.

The research underscores a varying commitment among restaurants to meet health standards in children's meals, with some already achieving the low-salt targets set by Public Health England for 2024.