

# Salt Matters: Preserving Choice, Protecting Health

[Dr. Thomas Frieden] Many Americans don't know that unseen salt drives up their blood pressure, increasing the risk of heart disease and stroke, which are the first and third leading causes of death in the United States.

[Narrator] But the salt shaker is not the major problem, nor is the pinch of salt tossed into the spaghetti sauce. The overwhelming majority of the salt we eat—about three-quarters of it—is already in foods we buy from grocery stores and restaurants.

Changing individual behavior is very hard, even among the most motivated. That's why *improving* the available choices remains part of the public health effort... along with education.

As individuals, we can *try* to read labels. We can *try* to refrain from picking up the saltshaker. And we can *try* to order carefully at restaurants. But the barriers remain numerous.

[Dr. Thomas Frieden] We can reduce sodium intake, decrease blood pressure, and prevent heart attacks and strokes.

Salt reduction in our food not only requires a new mindset, but a new environment—one in which healthier foods are the accessible and affordable default option for everyone.

Salt matters. We must act and act now.

[Narrator] For more information, please visit, [www.cdc.gov/salt](http://www.cdc.gov/salt).