

CDC SODIUM REDUCTION INITIATIVE

Saving Lives and Money



Sodium reduction is a national priority for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The agency is working with national, state, and local partners to gradually reduce sodium consumption, increase blood pressure control, and improve nutrition in the United States. Led by the agency's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, CDC is actively monitoring the following: (1) high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease deaths, (2) sodium consumption, (3) sodium content in foods, and (4) consumer readiness to reduce intake.

In support of this effort, CDC publishes data and research about sodium, educates and provides technical assistance to funded programs and partners working to reduce sodium in communities, and engages the food industry to understand challenges and solutions to sodium reduction in the food supply. Additionally, CDC's Sodium Reduction Initiative has supported the Million Hearts® goal of preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017 and will remain a focus in the next phase of Million Hearts® to be launched in 2017. This document presents a summary of select activities that support this work.

Monitoring

Monitoring cardiovascular health is critical for measuring the impact of public health policies and programs. CDC manages the [Data Trends & Maps](#) website, a national repository of resources that documents the public health burden of cardiovascular disease (CVD) and its risk factors at the national, state, and local levels. Along with this activity, CDC works collaboratively with private and public partners to enhance and expand surveillance of

sodium and related nutrients in foods, sodium and related nutrient intake, and consumer readiness to reduce sodium. Related nutrients are those that have the potential to be affected by food reformulation or changes in salt intake and include iodine, potassium, sugar, saturated fats, and trans fats. A general description of monitoring foods, intake, and consumer readiness includes the following:

Foods

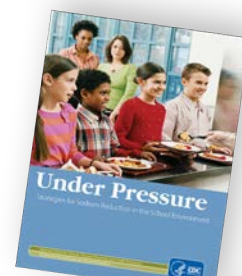
- Using sales and label information to track the sodium and related nutrient content of commercially packaged foods.
- Providing funding and technical support to partners for updated collection and reporting of the nutrient content of chain restaurant foods through [MenuStat](#).
- Collaborating with federal partners to conduct and report laboratory analyses of the [nutrient content of selected packaged and restaurant foods](#).

Intake

- Enhancing the monitoring of nutrient intake by providing support for updating national food and nutrient databases used with the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES).
- Expanding monitoring of sodium and related nutrient intake through analysis of urine biomarkers in national surveys.

Consumer Readiness

- Collecting data and reporting on U.S. consumer knowledge about and attitudes toward policies to reduce sodium in packaged and restaurant foods.



Why Is Eating Too Much Sodium Harmful?

- Eating too much sodium can lead to increased blood pressure, which can raise the risk of heart attack, stroke, and other cardiovascular conditions.
- On average, most Americans exceed their recommended daily limit of sodium.
- Reducing sodium intake can help lower blood pressure and improve heart health.

- Collecting and reporting state and local data on consumer action and health professional advice on sodium reduction through the [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)](#).

Applied Research

CDC conducts and supports applied research to understand correlates, determinants, and consequences of sodium intake; to help improve measurement of sodium intake; to design and test interventions to reduce sodium intake; and to translate research to programs, policies, and the public.

Correlates and Consequences

- Leading and supporting collaborative efforts to update the [Dietary Reference Intake](#) for sodium and potassium.
- Describing the sources of sodium in the United States and variability across population subgroups that include race/ethnicity, income, weight, and hypertension status.
- Collaboratively supporting a randomized controlled trial to examine the effects of the DASH dietary pattern and reduced sodium intake on cardiovascular disease risk factors in children (CAMP DASH trial).

Improve Measurement

- Determining the most accurate, low-cost, and feasible [urine biomarkers](#) to measure sodium intake.
- Supporting the development and testing of cell phone apps to capture nutrition and other data from packaged foods.

Design and Test Interventions

- Collaborating with partners to model the health impact and cost-effectiveness of sodium reduction strategies.

Translation

- Analyzing data from surveys to better understand consumer attitudes, behaviors, and use of specific strategies to reduce sodium intake.

Consumer Resources and Technical Assistance

CDC continues educating the general public and public health workforce about sodium reduction. Education is a critical aspect of CDC's sodium reduction initiative to help Americans better understand their risk and lower their sodium intake. Education and technical assistance is provided through collaborating with stakeholders, advancing and disseminating research, and providing technical assistance to funded programs and partners.

Partnerships

- Partnering with [EatingWell](#) magazine to host the Million Hearts® [Healthy Eating and Lifestyle Resource Center](#), which offers lower sodium, heart-healthy recipes and family-friendly meals.
- Providing information to international and national government agencies and public health organizations to support sodium reduction efforts through the [Sodium Reduction Toolkit: A Global Opportunity to Reduce Population-Level Sodium Intake](#) in English and Spanish.
- Informing the public health and food industry communities about sodium through weekly communications, including the *Salt in the News* and *Salt e-Update* newsletters. These resources are sent on alternating weeks to more than 475 stakeholders in the United States. The content is also translated to Chinese and disseminated to Chinese stakeholders.



Programs

- Funding eight states and localities to initiate voluntary sodium reduction strategies through the [Sodium Reduction in Communities Program \(SRCP\)](#).



- Contributing to the evidence base for community-based sodium reduction by conducting a national evaluation to assess how and to what extent select communities are implementing sodium reduction strategies.
- Supporting state and local program activities, including the promotion and adoption of food service guidelines and nutrition standards that include sodium standards and strengthening healthier food access and sales in retail venues, including more low or no sodium options.
- Collaborating with the National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI) and the Culinary Institute of America, CDC developed the technical assistance webinar series *[Reduce the Salt, Keep the Flavor](#)* to help food service operators and public health practitioners reduce sodium in food service operations.
- Working with communities to help food purchasers and operators reduce sodium by working with the Culinary Institute of America to develop four to five culinary training videos related to cooking techniques to reduce the sodium content in meals.

Industry and Public Engagement

CDC engages the food industry to understand both challenges and solutions related to sodium reduction and to cultivate new collaborations. CDC is aligning efforts with industry to support voluntary sodium reduction strategies. The expectation is that industry will demonstrate a significant and sustained commitment to substantive sodium reduction.

- Publishing [guides and resource documents](#) on how to reduce sodium in settings such as schools, hospitals, work sites, institutionalized environments, and in congregate meals served to older adults.

- Facilitating discussions among grantees, partners, and industry groups to better understand what can be and is being done to [reduce and reformulate sodium](#) in the food supply and at the community level.

For more information, visit

<http://www.cdc.gov/DHDSP/index.htm>.



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