

Sodium Message Map

<p>Question: Why is reducing sodium important to the success of Million Hearts®, and what can be done about it?</p>		
<p>Audience: Partners and stakeholders of Federal agencies</p>		
<p>Key Message 1: Americans consume excess sodium—primarily from salt added to food by manufacturers and restaurants—increasing their risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke.</p>	<p>Key Message 2: Increasing the availability and accessibility of lower sodium foods gives choice back to the consumer.</p>	<p>Key Message 3: Small steps towards lowering sodium can have a big impact.</p>
<p>1-1: About 40% of Americans’ sodium intake comes from only 10 food categories, including pizza, cheese, and breads.</p>	<p>2-1: Sodium reduction efforts target lifestyle, environmental, and systems changes and work as part of an integrated approach to improve outcomes related to the most urgent public health challenges facing our country today, including high blood pressure, and subsequently, heart disease and stroke.</p>	<p>3-1: Consumers can read the Nutrition Facts label while shopping to find the lowest sodium options of favorite foods and when eating out, request lower sodium options.</p>
<p>1-2: Americans on average eat about 3,400 mg of sodium a day, and most consumers should reduce daily sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg per day.</p>	<p>2-2: Most US adults recognize the health consequences of a high-sodium diet and are interested in reducing their sodium intake, but the high levels of sodium in the US food supply leave little opportunity for average consumers to adjust their intake.</p>	<p>3-2: Health care professionals can teach patients how to read and use nutrition labels when choosing foods, make small changes each day, and follow a diet consistent with the DASH eating plan.</p>
<p>1-3: On average, for most adults when sodium intake is reduced, blood pressure begins decreasing within weeks. Data also suggest sodium reduction lowers blood pressure in children, translating to lower blood pressure in adults if sustained over time.</p>	<p>2-3: Procurers of food can adopt the HHS/GSA or other procurement guidelines that define how much sodium can be in products that are sold or served in their facilities.</p>	<p>3-3: Even sustained reductions of 400 mg per day in sodium intake—about the amount in a slice of frozen cheese pizza—could avert 28,000 deaths from any cause and save \$7 billion health care dollars each year.</p>

- Select Sodium Resources:
 - [Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010](#)
 - [Million Hearts e-Update](#)
 - [DASH diet](#)
 - [Million Hearts Healthy Eating and Lifestyle Resource Center](#)
 - [NIH NHLBI Heart Healthy Recipes](#)
 - [Health and Sustainability Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations](#)
 - [Improving the Food Environment through Nutrition Standards: A Guide for Government Procurement](#)
 - [CDC Vital Signs](#)