Overview

Sodium Consumption as a public health issue
- Health Impact
- Healthcare Costs

Use of law & policy in reducing sodium consumption
- Federal
- State & Local

Challenges to State & Local options

Next Steps

Conclusion
THE PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE
Sodium reduction remains a priority

10/12/2012 - by Jeff Gelski and Keith Nunes

Salt is bad for you, except it isn’t
Posted By Jim Treacher On 10:33 AM 07/11/2013 In DC Trawler / No Comments

Voluntary reduction has failed as processed and fast food salt levels remain high
May 13, 2013 | by Maria Paul

SALT LEVELS IN FOOD STILL DANGEROUSLY HIGH

How Much Should Americans Cut Back On Salt? Institute Of Medicine Weighs In
No Benefit Seen in Sharp Limits on Salt in Diet
by CHA KOLAYA
In a report that undercuts years of public health warnings, a prestigious group convened by the government says t

Most Americans still eating too much salt
Thu. Aug 16 2012

Cutting sodium intake is easier than you think

Some bacon found to be "saltier than seawater"; two strips of some bacon contain half the recommended daily salt intake
Why is Salt Important?

- NaCl = 40% Sodium, 60% Chloride
- Essential = 500 mg/day
- Inexpensive
- The source of 90% of the sodium in food supply
- Multipurpose
Where is sodium found?

- Processed & Restaurant: 77%
- Naturally Occurring: 12%
- Added while eating: 6%
- Added during home cooking: 5%

American Heart Association’s “Salty Six”

1. **BREADS & ROLLS**
   Some foods that you eat several times a day, such as bread, add up to a lot of sodium even though each serving may not seem high in sodium. Check the labels to find lower-sodium varieties.

2. **COLD CUTS & CURED MEATS**
   One 2 oz. serving, or 6 thin slices, of deli meat can contain as much as half of your daily recommended dietary sodium. Look for lower-sodium varieties of your favorite lunch meats.

3. **PIZZA**
   A slice of pizza with several toppings can contain more than half of your daily recommended dietary sodium. Limit the cheese and add more veggies to your next slice.

4. **POULTRY**
   Sodium levels in poultry can vary based on preparation methods. You will find a wide range of sodium in poultry products, so it is important to choose wisely.

5. **SOUP**
   Sodium in one cup of canned soup can range from 100 to as much as 940 milligrams—more than half of your daily recommended intake. Check the labels to find lower sodium varieties.

6. **SANDWICHES**
   A sandwich or burger from a fast food restaurant can contain more than 100 percent of your daily suggested dietary sodium. Try half a sandwich with a side salad instead.
Intake Levels

Sodium in mg/day

Recommendation

USDA
- 2,300 mg
  General Adult pop

USDA
- 1,500 mg
  At-risk populations

WHO
- 2,000 mg

AHA
- 1,500 mg

ACTUAL
- 3,400 mg
# Public Health Concern

## Health Impact

- **Hypertension**
  - ≈68 million adults (1 in 3)
- **Cardiovascular Disease & Stroke**
  - ≈800,000 adult deaths per year
- **Stomach Cancer**
- **MS**

## Healthcare Costs

- Immediate decrease in intake to 2300mg may save $18 billion in health care costs annually
- Gradual decrease by 40% over 10yrs would save ≈500,000 lives
- Decrease by 400mg/day would save $7 billion annually
LAW & POLICY
AT FEDERAL LEVEL
2010 IOM Report - *Strategies to Reduce Sodium Intake in the U.S.*

- **Primary**
  - Modify GRAS status of Salt

- **Interim**
  - Voluntary collaborations

- **Supporting**
  - Revisions to labeling, sodium claims, Daily Value levels
“FDA should modify the generally recognized as safe (GRAS) status of salt added to processed foods in order to reduce the salt content of the food supply in a stepwise manner.”
WHY GRAS?

- Nothing can be added to food until it has been approved for safety by the FDA, unless the substance is “generally recognized as safe” better known as “GRAS.”
  - The FDA considers salt’s use as a:
    - “common food ingredient” to be “Generally Recognized as Safe” (GRAS) without any special conditions.
    - There are no legal limits on how much salt can be added to food, as long as within “good manufacturing practices” (reasonable limit for desired taste/or purpose)
- Modifying the GRAS status of salt will create limits on the amount of sodium used in food production
## Interim- Voluntary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry- Led</th>
<th>Government- Led</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Children’s Food &amp; Beverage Advertising Initiative (CFBAI)</td>
<td>- National Salt Reduction Initiative (NSRI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- National Restaurant Association Kids LiveWell</td>
<td>- Interagency Working Group (IWG)</td>
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<td>- Individual Companies</td>
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<td>- Subway</td>
<td>- CDC Sodium Reduction in Communities Program</td>
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Supporting - FDA

Nutrition Labeling
- Improve effectiveness of the Nutrition Facts Panel through front of package labeling

Menu Labeling/Sodium claims
- Expand regulations under the Nutrition Labeling Education Act of 1990 (NLEA) to cover sodium content claims on menu items

Daily Value
- Considering lowering from 2,400mg to 2,300mg or 1,500mg recommendations
# Supporting - USDA

<table>
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<tr>
<th>USDA School Breakfast Program</th>
<th>USDA School Lunch Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>National School Breakfast Program Guidelines</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>○ 25%-27% reduction in sodium content in breakfast meals, from 2004-‘05 baseline numbers</td>
<td>○ 53%-54% reduction in sodium content, from 2004-‘05 baseline numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ 3-step reduction (2, 5, and 10 yrs from July 1, 2012)</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Final limits range from ≤ 430 - ≤ 500 mg/meal</td>
<td>○ Final limits range from ≤ 640 - ≤ 740 mg/meal</td>
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LAW & POLICY AT THE STATE & LOCAL LEVELS
Menu Labeling

- Disclosure of sodium content on menus & menu boards
- NLEA does not preempt establishments < 20 national outlets
- FDA Waiver
  - Philadelphia sodium content on menus

Warning Labels

- Under NLEA, state & local authorities can mandate warnings relating to safety of the food or components of food.
- Ex: High sodium content on menus or shelves
## Procurement, Licensing, Taxing

### Procurement

- Gov. use of purchasing power to reduce sodium
  - MA Dept of Public Health
    - Nutritional policies for purchased and prepared foods for all state agencies
  - NYC Nutrition Purchasing Criteria
    - 2008 individual foods & meals
    - 2009 beverages
    - 2011 vending machines

### Licensing/ Taxing

- Inclusion of a sodium reduction requirement as part of licensing standards
- Higher sales tax on high sodium meals and individual items
Voluntary Initiatives

90+ State & Local authorities and health organizations as partners in NSRI

Shawnee County Department of Health as recipient of CDC Sodium Reduction in Communities program set goal to reduce sodium in concessions at Topeka County Zoo by 25%

Shawnee County provided convenience stores with low sodium items and increased access to fresh fruit and produce

NYC Dept of Health & Mental Hygiene recently launched a media campaign “Compare labels, Choose less Sodium” on city subways urging consumers to make better choices
CHALLENGES TO STATE & LOCAL OPTIONS
Challenges

- Political Will
- Technical/Scientific issues
- Public Awareness
- Nanny state argument
- Industry pushback

- Monetary Resources
- Evaluation/Oversight
- Greater impact

Mandatory

Voluntary
International Examples

**United Kingdom**

- Coordinated voluntary national effort to reduce sodium intake by 20% with voluntary collaborations by government and industry
- 20% decrease in intake announced last summer- current national daily intake amount is 3,240 mg

**Finland**

- Requires high salt warnings on foods exceeding certain amounts of sodium in specific categories
- Currently one of the lowest national sodium intake amounts of 3,000 mg/day
Next Steps

- Educate
- Collaborate
- Regulate
Government & Policy Makers

Food Industry manufacturers & preparers

Researchers and Academia

Consumers

Health Professionals
Conclusion

- Sodium intake is still too high given all recommended amounts
- Voluntary efforts alone will not bring Sodium levels down- need regulations
- Opportunity for great health impact exists at state & local levels
THANK YOU!
QUESTIONS?