

# Reducing Salt Intake in the U.S. Could Save Tens of Thousands of Lives Each Year

**Heart attacks and strokes kill more than 800,000 people in the U.S. each year. Diets high in salt increase blood pressure, a leading risk factor for these events.**

↑ Salt intake → ↑ Blood pressure → ↑ Risk of heart attack and stroke

## Typical diets contain too much salt.

Most adults consume twice the recommended limit of salt each day.

## Reducing salt requires industry action.

Almost 80% of salt in our diets comes from packaged and restaurant foods. This makes it very hard for even the most motivated person to limit salt intake.

## Even people with normal blood pressure benefit from lowering their salt intake.

The health benefits start immediately – blood pressure decreases within weeks.

## High blood pressure is the leading cause of US racial health disparities.

Studies suggest that reducing salt intake is especially beneficial for blacks.

### **National Salt Reduction Initiative Goal**

**Reduce Americans' sodium intake by 20% over 5 years**



### **Progress to Date**

1. More than 70 cities, states and national health organizations have come together to create a National Salt Reduction Initiative (NSRI).
2. The initiative has developed databases to assess the sodium content of packaged and restaurant foods and will monitor progress in reducing it.
3. A baseline assessment of New York City population sodium intake was conducted in 2010.
4. In consultation with food industry leaders, the initiative has developed final targets for sodium reduction over a five-year period.
5. 28 companies have committed to the NSRI targets as of March 2011.

### **Next Steps**

1. Monitor industry achievements in 2012 and 2014.
2. Assess changes in NYC population sodium intake in 2014.
3. Pursue additional industry commitments to NSRI targets.

For more information, visit [nyc.gov/health/salt](http://nyc.gov/health/salt).