Top Ten Things To Know
Sodium, Blood Pressure, and Cardiovascular Disease: 
Further Evidence Supporting the American Heart Association 
Sodium Reduction Recommendations

1. The cardiovascular benefits of reduced salt intake are enormous and as critical as the benefits of population-wide reductions in tobacco use, obesity, and cholesterol levels. This benefit extends to all Americans.

2. Suggestions by some groups that healthy people can consume more sodium are based on incorrect analyses of observational studies and misinterpretations of clinical research.

3. A detailed review of new studies identified serious methodological weaknesses, which limit the value of these reports in setting or revising sodium intake policy.

4. Independent of its effects on BP, excess sodium intake adversely affects the heart, kidneys, and blood vessels. Excess sodium intake has also been linked to kidney stones, asthma, osteoporosis, and gastric cancer.

5. The majority of the American public today either has high blood pressure or is at high risk for developing it.

6. Approximately 90% of all Americans will develop hypertension over their lifetime.

7. The American Heart Association’s 2020 impact goals – to reduce death from cardiovascular disease by 20% by improving the cardiovascular wellness by 20% – include a population-wide reduction of sodium consumption to less than 1500 mg/day, which is one metric that will be used to gauge the nation’s cardiovascular health.

8. Current sodium consumption in the U.S. is more than two times higher than the recommended upper limit of 1500 mg sodium per day.

9. More than 75% of consumed sodium comes from processed foods and therefore any meaningful strategy to reduce sodium intake at the population level must involve the efforts of food manufacturers, food processors, and restaurant industries.

10. Study authors conclude that a comprehensive approach to cardiovascular health promotion and disease prevention is multifactorial and includes performing regular physical activity, maintaining a healthy body weight, managing blood pressure, controlling blood sugar, and avoiding tobacco. Sodium reduction is a very important component of a healthy diet.

http://circ.ahajournals.org/lookup/doi/10.1161/CIR.0b013e318279acb
© 2012, American Heart Association. All rights reserved.