

FDA Issues Guidance on Voluntary Sodium Reduction

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- FDA has [issued](#) food industry guidance for voluntary sodium reduction targets in foods. The guidance is intended to provide voluntary short-term goals for food manufacturers, chain restaurants, and food service operators for 163 categories of processed, packaged, and prepared foods.
- FDA [acknowledges](#) that sodium is widely present in the American diet and that approximately 70% of total sodium intake is from sodium added during food manufacturing and commercial food preparation. Average sodium intake in the U.S. is approximately 3,400 mg/day, whereas the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and recommendations from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine advise individuals 14 years and older to limit their consumption to 2,300 mg/day. The targets in the final guidance seek to decrease average sodium intake from 3,400 mg to 3,000 mg/day over the next 2.5 years.
- The Agency recommends that the food industry work to meet both a target mean concentration and an upper bound concentration of sodium for various specified categories of foods as soon as possible. In the future, FDA plans to issue revised targets to further lower the sodium content and continue to help reduce the sodium intake. FDA notes that such voluntary and gradual approaches have been successful in other countries, such as Canada and the U.K.
- The FDA guidance follows a [petition](#) and [lawsuit](#) filed by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI). CSPI [now requests](#) that FDA provide consumer education on the importance of sodium reduction, finalize long-term sodium reduction targets, and consider mandatory standards.

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