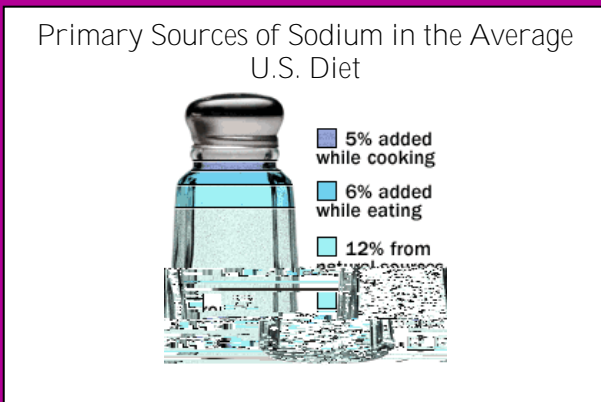# Salt of the Earth
Reducing Sodium in the U.S. Diet

OVERVIEW

One in 10 cardiovascular deaths worldwide have been attributed to consuming too much sodium.[1] High sodium intake is associated with high blood pressure.[2] About 1 in 3 adults living in the U.S. have high blood pressure[3] and only half have their high blood pressure under control.[4] Alarmingly, many youth are also being diagnosed with high blood pressure.[5] This common condition increases the risk for heart disease and stroke, two leading causes of death in the U.S.[3]

One in 10 cardiovascular deaths have been attributed to sodium intake of greater than 2,000 milligrams a day.[6] On average, that level is exceeded by 99.2 percent of the world's adults.[6] In the U.S., it is estimated that 66,508 deaths, 9.5 percent of all cardiometabolic deaths, were attributed to high sodium diets.[7]

The American Heart Association advocates for a multifaceted, stepwise reduction in sodium consumption in the diet. The association further recommends a simultaneous sustained commitment by the food and restaurant industries to reduce the amount of salt added to the food supply.

Primary Sources of Sodium in the Average U.S. Diet

- 5% added while cooking
- 6% added while eating
- 12% from natural sources

Adapted from Harnack et al, 2017

AMOUNT OF SODIUM IN THE U.S. DIET

On average Americans consume 3,440 mg of sodium per day.[8] Only a small amount of total sodium intake comes from sodium naturally ocurring in foods (14 percent), from salt added in home cooking (6 percent), or at the table (5 percent).[9] More than 70 percent of the sodium Americans consume comes from processed, prepackaged, and restaurant foods.[8] Mixed dishes including burgers, sandwiches,

Mean Sodium Intake by Age and Sex

Males Females