Excess salt is in more foods than you think!
It’s time to reduce your sodium intake.

Excess salt puts us at risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, and kidney disease. Take the pledge to reduce the sodium you eat!

www.heart.org/SODIUM
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Appendix:
- Sodium Presentation Template
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Sodium Key Messaging

Americans’ love for salt is having a dramatic impact on their health. The average American takes in more than 3,400 milligrams of sodium each day—almost 2,000 milligrams more than the American Heart Association recommends. Sodium is an essential nutrient and a little salt can be part of a healthy diet, but the amounts we are eating are far too high and can increase the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and other health problems.

- Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death and disability worldwide, and high blood pressure is one of the major risk factors.
- High blood pressure is the leading risk factor of women’s deaths in the U.S., and the second leading risk factor for death for men.
- One-third of American adults have high blood pressure, and about 90 percent of American adults are expected to develop high blood pressure over their lifetimes.
- More than 40 percent of non-Hispanic black adults have high blood pressure. Not only is high blood pressure more prevalent in blacks than whites, but it also develops earlier in life.

The biggest contributor to our sodium consumption? It’s not the salt shaker. More than 75 percent of sodium consumption is from processed, prepackaged, and restaurant foods. This makes it hard for people to choose foods with less sodium and to limit how much sodium they are eating because it is already added to their food before they buy it. Any meaningful strategy to reduce sodium intake at the population level must involve the efforts of food manufacturers, food processors, and restaurant industries. Successful sodium reduction requires action and partnership at all levels—individuals, healthcare providers, professional organizations, public health agencies, governments, and industry.

Other Sodium Facts:

- Too much salt can damage blood vessels over time, paving the way for high blood pressure.
- Blood pressure rises with age, and eating less sodium now will help to blunt that rise and also reduce the risk of developing other conditions, such as kidney disease, that are associated with eating too much sodium.
- Results from one study showed that more people reported headaches when eating higher-sodium diets than lower-sodium diets.
- Excess sodium can make the body retain extra water, which may cause bloating.
- Children ages 1-18 are at risk of developing heart disease and elevated blood pressure at an earlier age, because nearly 80 percent of 1 to 3-year-olds and more than 90 percent of 4 to 18-year-olds eat too much sodium.
- Kids who have high sodium diets are about 40 percent more likely to have elevated blood pressure than kids who have lower sodium diets.
- Taste preferences for salty foods may be established early in life, so children’s preference for salt may be reduced if they are exposed to lower sodium diets at a young age.

www.heart.org/SODIUM
Tips to Reduce Your Sodium:

- Compare labels of similar products and choose the one with the lowest amount of sodium; limit intake of processed, prepackaged and restaurant foods; control portion sizes; and cook at home more—use herbs, spices, citrus juices, and vinegars instead of salt to add flavor to foods.
- Over time, your taste buds can adjust to prefer less salt. Research has shown that when people eat a lower-sodium diet over time, they begin to prefer those foods and foods they used to like taste too salty.
- Visit heart.org/sodium for more information and tips for reducing sodium in your diet, along with healthy recipes without too much sodium.

Calls-to-Action—act on these calls at heart.org/sodium and share them with your friends:

- Take the pledge to reduce the sodium you eat
- Watch the video to learn how salt sneaks up on you
- Upload a photo and/or story about your efforts to break up with excess salt
- Read the Salty Scoop blog and leave a comment

For Additional Info, Contact AHA Staff:

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E-Communications Samples

In addition to including a blurb in newsletters, we encourage you to send individual, stand-alone communications about the sodium campaign. It is more likely that individuals will take action if they receive a stand-alone communication about the campaign as opposed to just seeing a blurb about it in a longer newsletter.

Article Content:

Salt is sneaky—watch out for excess salt in your foods!

Did you know that most Americans eat more than twice the American Heart Association’s recommended amount of sodium? Chances are, that includes you—even if you rarely pick up the salt shaker. The worst part is, most of us don’t even realize how much salt we’re taking in. But sure enough, Salt is sneaking up on us—mostly when we go out to restaurants or eat packaged foods. Check out this new 1-minute video to see for yourself: http://bit.ly/1trMjLv

It’s true; many of us love salt. In fact, sodium is an essential nutrient! But the excess amounts we’re eating put us at risk for elevated blood pressure which means an increased risk of heart disease and stroke. As much as we might have an affinity for salt, it’s just not worth the cost to our hearts. There are plenty of other ways to enjoy tasty food with less salt. Check out the American Heart Association’s new website, heart.org/sodium, to get the 411 on sodium, including a blog, quiz, infographics, links to lower-sodium recipes and more.

That’s why the American Heart Association is kicking off a new campaign, “I love you salt, but you’re breaking my heart.” Stand up for your health and pledge to reduce your sodium intake today! Take the pledge here: http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R
Sodium and Your Health

Sodium is a mineral that’s essential for life. When there’s extra sodium in your bloodstream, it pulls water into your blood vessels, increasing the total volume of blood inside. With more blood flowing through, blood pressure increases. It’s like turning up the water supply to a garden hose — the pressure in the hose increases as more water is blasted through it. Over time, high blood pressure may overstretch or injure the blood vessel walls and speed the build-up of gunky plaque that can block blood flow. The added pressure also tires out the heart by forcing it to work harder to pump blood through the body.

Even if you don’t have high blood pressure, eating less sodium can help blunt the rise in blood pressure that occurs with age, and reduce your risk of heart attack, heart failure, stroke, kidney disease, osteoporosis, stomach cancer and even headaches. The extra water in your body can also lead to bloating and weight gain.

Kids aren’t immune to the heartbreak of too much sodium either. Nearly 80 percent of 1-3 year olds and more than 90 percent of 4-18 year-olds in the U.S. get too much sodium, and this can start increasing their risk of high blood pressure when they are as young as 1 year old. Kids who have high-sodium diets are about 40 percent more likely to have elevated blood pressure than kids with lower-sodium diets. This puts them at higher risk for heart disease when they get older.

If someone is sensitive to salt, this means increasing or decreasing their salt intake has a greater effect on their blood pressure (compared to someone who is not sensitive to salt). The effects of salt and sodium on blood pressure tend to be greater in blacks, people over 50, and people with high blood pressure, diabetes or kidney disease. That’s about half the American population.

But don’t think you’re off the hook if you’re not in one of those groups. Almost everyone can benefit from cutting back on salt, because nearly all of us eat too much. Blood pressure rises with age, and eating less sodium now will curb that rise and put us on a path to a healthier life.

Along with reducing your risk for high blood pressure, bloating and other effects of too much sodium, cutting sodium might save money:

- One estimate suggested that if Americans moved to an average intake of 1,500 mg/day sodium, it could result in a 25.6 percent overall decrease in blood pressure and an estimated $26.2 billion in health care savings.
- Another estimate projected that achieving this goal would reduce deaths from cardiovascular disease by anywhere from 500,000 to nearly 1.2 million over the next 10 years.

Join the American Heart Association’s new campaign, “I love you salt, but you’re breaking my heart.” Stand up for your health and pledge to reduce your sodium intake today! Take the pledge here: http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R
Email Messages Content:

Phase 1 (Awareness) Email Message:
Subject: We’re watching for sneaky Salt, and you should too.

Dear [NAME],

We’re keeping our eye on sneaky Salt. Are you going to join us?

You see, for years, Salt has been sneaking into Americans’ diets—especially when we go to restaurants or eat packaged foods, not through a salt shaker. In fact, most of us eat more than double what is ideal for heart health. And it’s wreaking havoc on our hearts by contributing to high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. If we start replacing or reducing some of the sodium in our diets, we could help to turn this trend around ([http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk](http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk)).

How can you reduce the sodium you eat? Learn where Salt is hiding so you know how to be more aware of him. ([http://bit.ly/TVzybC](http://bit.ly/TVzybC))

Some of America’s most popular foods contribute a lot of sodium to our diets. “The Salty Six” may seem like unlikely culprits, but some contain up to half of the daily recommended sodium. Breads? Poultry? Sandwiches? Yes. Too much, too often could cause you to experience negative effects, such as bloating or high blood pressure. Remember, a healthier you is always within reach.


Thank you,
[INSERT CONTACT NAME]
Phase 1 (Awareness) Email Message:

Subject: You probably don’t know…

Dear [NAME],

Think you know how much sodium you eat? A recent American Heart Association survey shows that you may have no idea!

Ninety-seven percent of people surveyed either underestimated—more than half were off by around 1,000 mg—or could not estimate their sodium consumption. In light of that fact that most Americans eat more than half the recommended amount of sodium, the fact that they have no idea may pose a big problem for their health; excess sodium can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke.

It’s time for all of us to get a better handle on how much sodium we eat. You can start by taking this quiz to find out how much you know about your sodium intake. (http://bit.ly/1mk5Cl3)

Then join the hundreds of other Americans who are reducing their sodium intake by signing the pledge today! (http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R)

Thank you,

[INSERT CONTACT NAME]
Phase 2 (Break Up with Salt) Message:
Subject: [NAME], it’s time.

Dear [NAME],

We’ve talked to you about the unhealthy relationship many people have with Salt, and you probably have it too. In fact, most Americans do. Salt’s current role in our lives hasn’t served any of us well. He sneaks into our prepackaged foods, and dumps himself into our restaurant foods, increasing our risk of heart disease and stroke.

[NAME], this relationship with Salt is unhealthy, and it’s gone on long enough. It’s time to break up with Salt and start a healthier relationship with food. (http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R)

It’s not too late to undo the damage he’s done, and don’t worry, you’re not the only one who is breaking up. Many others have already taken the pledge to break up with excess salt, and they’re working to be more aware of how he can negatively impact their diet, especially through the Salty Six. (http://bit.ly/TVzybC)

Don’t delay any longer. Stand up for your health today and pledge to reduce your sodium intake by saying, “I Love You Salt, But You’re Breaking My Heart.” (http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R)

Thank you,
[INSERT CONTACT NAME]

Phase 2 (Break Up with Salt) Message:
Subject: You did it!

Dear [NAME],

We know it’s not easy. We know you love him. But, it’s the right thing to break up with Salt. Your heart will thank you.

Now that you know about sodium and its impact on your health, look out for those close to you. Can you think of any family members or friends who may be getting too much sodium? Share how you’ve broken up with Salt and how they can too—tell your story here! (http://bit.ly/1q29SZY)

Maybe they have no idea; they may even seem healthy. But as you know, salt can be sneaky and dangerous. They probably don’t know they eat way more salt than they should.

Don’t delay. Too much salt is breaking the hearts of your friends and family members. Share your salt story now so others will be inspired! (http://bit.ly/1q29SZY)

Thank you,
[INSERT CONTACT NAME]
Social Media Sample Messaging

The messages below were drafted to promote the sodium reduction campaign on Facebook, Twitter, and Google+. Informational messages are best used to lay the groundwork for your campaign. These types of messages strive to get people interested in the initiative and to increase awareness of the dangers of excess sodium.

Once you spend some time educating your supporters about your campaign, they’ll be ready to act in support of sodium reduction. Actionable messages give followers an opportunity to take action—whether that’s inviting their friends to join the campaign, sharing a photo or story, taking the quiz, or taking the pledge. Your followers have joined your campaign to make an impact, and now is your chance to involve them in your efforts to reduce daily sodium intake.

Twitter:

Tweets for Phase 1 (Awareness):

- #DYK: 77 percent of the sodium America consumes comes from processed, prepackaged, and restaurant foods. Learn more at http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk #SneakySalt
- It’s not about the salt shaker. You’re getting more sodium than you need, mostly through some prepackaged and restaurant foods. Check out the facts here: http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk
- Too much Salt has sneaky health impacts. Replace salt with herbs & spices to flavor your foods & keep your heart healthy! http://bit.ly/saltbreakup
- Reduce your salt intake and protect your heart by getting the Salty Scoop: http://bit.ly/1qO3O4Y #SneakySalt
- We need less salt in our prepackaged foods—our health depends on it! http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk RT if you watch for #SneakySalt!
- Too much salt? Americans eat 3,400+ mg of sodium every day—way more than recommended. Salt's everywhere—see for yourself: http://bit.ly/1trMjLv
- Sure, we love Salt…but we don’t realize he sneaks into processed, prepackaged, and restaurants foods! http://bit.ly/1trMjLv #SneakySalt
- Salt is everywhere! http://bit.ly/1trMjLv—now THAT’S scary. #SneakySalt
- Don’t let Salt sneak up on you. http://bit.ly/1trMjLv #SneakySalt
- Think you have a healthy diet? Take our quiz to see how sodium-savvy you are: http://bit.ly/1mk5Cl3 #SneakySalt
- Eating less sodium NOW can vastly improve your future health! Take the quiz to test your knowledge and learn how! http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R
- Your friends need to know—too much sodium is harmful to our health! Share this video with them now! http://bit.ly/1trMjLv
- Share a photo of your heart-healthy snacks or meals here: http://bit.ly/U5D03C
- Think you’re worth your salt? Check out the sodium myths infographic – did any of these catch you by surprise? http://bit.ly/TVzybC
Tweets for Phase 2 (Break Up with Salt):

- Salt, you’re breaking our hearts! Studies show too much #salt can lead to heart disease: [http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk #SneakySalt](http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk #SneakySalt)
- DYK that we don’t control most of the salt in our diet? You deserve better. Pledge to break up with excess salt today: [http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R](http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R)
- Friends don’t let friends eat too much sodium. Tell your friends salt is breaking their heart and it’s time for a break up. [http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R](http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R)
- Salt has snuck into our foods! Pizza, bread, & poultry, to name a few. Stop this sneaky character in his tracks, and break up with him today [http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R](http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R)
- “Hey salt! We love you, but you’re breaking out heart.” That’s our breakup line. What’s yours? #SneakySalt
- Be a good friend: tell your friends to end their unhealthy relationship with Salt by sharing your salt story! [http://bit.ly/1q29SZY #SneakySalt](http://bit.ly/1q29SZY)
- We may love Salt, but it turns out he’s a real heartbreaker. Have you had your sodium breakup yet? [http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R](http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R)
- It’s time for your friends to say “I Love You Salt, But You’re Breaking My Heart.” RT to tell them to breakup with Salt today! #SneakySalt

Facebook:

**Posts for Phase 1 (Awareness):**

- We’ve been learning a lot about our relationship with Salt lately, and it’s not all good. In fact, Salt is sneaking up on us. See for yourself: <iframe width="640" height="360" src="/www.youtube.com/embed/YR81aziXRfw" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen"></iframe>
- Some people think too much salt is something to scream about. We tend to agree: <iframe width="640" height="360" src="/www.youtube.com/embed/YR81aziXRfw" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen"></iframe>
- Too much sodium can be harmful to your heart and overall health. Luckily, there are plenty of ways to cut back. Get the Salty Scoop now! [http://bit.ly/1qO3O4Y](http://bit.ly/1qO3O4Y)
- Did you know the majority of your sodium doesn’t come from a salt shaker? It comes from processed, prepackaged, and restaurant foods! Discover all the latest facts on sodium here: [http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk](http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk)
- Slash your sodium intake by cooking more at home and using herbs, spices, citrus juices, and vinegars instead of salt to flavor your meals. You can help friends and family live healthy, too, by clicking SHARE now! [http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk](http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk)
- Sneaky Salt is finding his way into our diets and increasing our risk of heart disease and stroke. <iframe width="640" height="360" src="/www.youtube.com/embed/YR81aziXRfw" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen"></iframe>
- Want more info about keeping your sodium levels healthy? Visit [http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk](http://bit.ly/1w6kYuk) to learn more & take a pledge to reduce your salt intake. Watching for too much salt has long term benefits for your health!
• How is your relationship with salt going? If you’re like most other Americans, it’s unhealthy, and you may not even realize it. Take this quiz to find out if your relationship with salt needs couples therapy! [http://bit.ly/1mk5Cl3](http://bit.ly/1mk5Cl3)

• Hey everyone! We’re trying to get the word out that our nation needs to break up with excess salt! Share this with your friends so they can be aware of Sneaky Salt too!

• Eating too much sodium can lead to high blood pressure, putting you at risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke. By taking the pledge to reduce your sodium intake, you can help lead us to a heart-healthier future. [http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R](http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R)

• How much salt is too much? The average American eats more than 3,400 mg of sodium every day, more than twice as much than the [@AmericanHeartAssociation – My Heart. My Life](http://bit.ly/1mk5Cl3) recommends! Take the quiz to learn how sodium impacts your heart:

• Help more people realize just how sneaky salt is! Print these infographics and put them up in your community! [http://bit.ly/TVzybC](http://bit.ly/TVzybC)

**Posts for Phase 2 (Break Up with Salt):**

• Ever thought of breaking up with Salt? What if we told you he was slowly, but surely, breaking your heart? [iframe width="640" height="360" src="//www.youtube.com/embed/YR81aziXRfw" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen>](http://www.youtube.com/embed/YR81aziXRfw)

• Salt has been hiding out in our foods for too long—elevating our sodium levels and putting us at risk for heart disease. We deserve better than this. Join the movement to break up with Salt, and start a healthier relationship today: [http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R](http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R)

• High blood pressure and heart disease don’t just affect adults—nearly 80 percent of 1 to 3-year-olds and more than 90 percent of 4 to 18-year-olds eat too much sodium! Take the pledge if you agree it’s time for everyone to break up with excess sodium!

• We all want our children to have the healthiest foods available. But, their diets are often loaded with salt, and kids who have high sodium diets are about 40 percent more likely to have elevated blood pressure than kids who have lower sodium diets. Let’s work together to reduce salt levels for our children by taking the pledge to break up with excess salt! [http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R](http://bit.ly/1zrYF6R)

• Have you broken up with salt? Tell us about it! We want to know how you reduced salt in your diet and kicked excess sodium to the curb: [http://bit.ly/1q29SZY](http://bit.ly/1q29SZY)

• Is there anyone in your life who might be eating too much sodium? Share our video with them today so they can break up with salt too! We ALL deserve better. [iframe width="640" height="360" src="//www.youtube.com/embed/YR81aziXRfw" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen>](http://www.youtube.com/embed/YR81aziXRfw)
Or, for something a little different…Pair these fun graphics with a message

**Facebook:** “Dating can be tough. Don’t be fooled by sneaky salt, who might seem like the “right match” in your search for love. Instead you should take a stand to avoid a relationship with salt by reducing your sodium intake: sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

**Twitter:** “Don’t be fooled by salt disguised as the “right match” for you! Avoid a relationship with salt: sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

**Facebook:** “With so many ways to find “the one” online, salt should be one less worry. Avoid the sneaky salt trap and break up with sneaky salt. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

**Twitter:** “Finding “the one” is hard. A healthy diet is easy when you stay away from sneaky salt. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

**Facebook:** “Too much salt tends to ruin a good time. Don’t let salt be the party crasher at your New Year’s celebration. Reduce salt in your cooking and groceries you buy. Check the labels and promise to reduce sodium in the New Year: sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

**Twitter:** “Salt is a party crasher. Avoid too much salt at your New Year’s party – promise to reduce sodium: sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

**Facebook:** “Did salt ruin your New Year’s celebration? With extra sodium present, blood pressure can increase. Don’t invite sneaky salt back to your next party. Break up with salt by staying away from salty snacks and foods at parties. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

**Twitter:** “Did salt ruin your NYE party? Don’t invite salt to your next party. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”
Facebook: “Salt is calling your name, but a long-term commitment to salt can be extremely unhealthy. Let’s put an end to unhealthy relationships by vowing not to give into salt temptations. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Twitter: “A relationship with too much sodium can be unhealthy. Vow to reduce sodium. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Facebook: “Avoiding salt is good for your health... until it starts to call your name. Make your breakup with salt permanent. Pledge to reduce your sodium intake. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Twitter: “Break up with salt, and avoid temptation to go back! Pledge to reduce your sodium intake. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Facebook: “Is salt repeatedly breaking your heart? Less salt in your diet can help you get healthy. Stay out of an unhealthy relationship with salt with less salt in your diet. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Twitter: “If salt keeps breaking your heart, then stay away! Promise to consume less salt. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Facebook: “Getting out of a bad relationship can mean you have more time to work on yourself. Leave salt out of your diet and make more time for a healthier you! sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Twitter: “Have more time for you. Make your life healthier and breakup with salt. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”
Facebook: “Have you been trying to reduce sodium? Take action and break up with sodium during your lunch break. Too much salt in your lunch can lead to a high sodium intake for the day. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Twitter: “Stay away from salt during lunch. Pledge to make your lunches healthier with less salt. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Facebook: “You may hear that lunch is better with lots of salt. Take back your lunchtime health by consuming less salt and choosing lunches with low amounts of sodium. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Twitter: “Lunch w/too much salt can be unhealthy. Take back lunch from sneaky salt and consume less sodium. sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Facebook: “Stay away from the “heartbreaker”, Salt. Make sure you break up with salt before you are heartbroken: sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”

Twitter: “Stay away from this heartbreaker. Break up with salt before you are heartbroken: sodiumbreakup.heart.org #BreakupwithSalt”