

U.S. Institute of Medicine Report and National Salt Reduction Initiative

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INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE
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Advising the nation / Improving health

Institute of Medicine Committee Task

Review and make recommendations about strategies that could be employed to reduce dietary sodium intake to levels recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

Relevance for the Health of the American Public

Lowering sodium intake will reduce development of adverse health conditions:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Kidney disease



Unique Challenges of Sodium Reduction

Ubiquity of sodium in the food supply

Various functions of sodium in food:

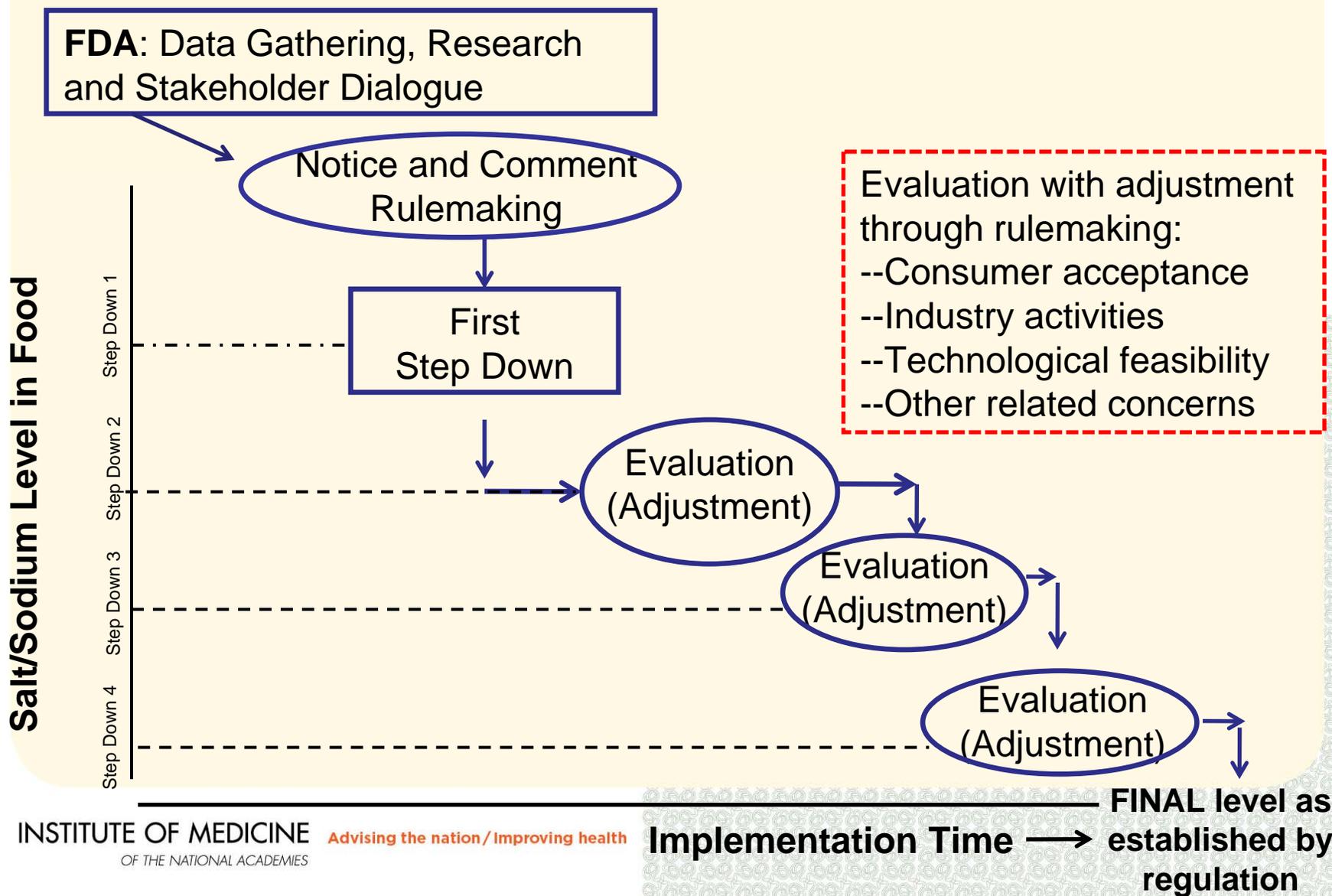
- Taste & flavor
- Safety & shelf life
- Texture

Consumer taste preferences

Primary Recommended Strategy

A coordinated approach to set standards for safe levels of sodium added to foods using existing Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorities to modify the Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) status of salt and other sodium-containing compounds

Stepwise process for achieving final standards



Supporting Strategies - Government

Update sodium labeling regulations

- Federal Government: Change from percent daily value of sodium to adequate intake, and revise related claims
- Congress: Remove labeling exemption for foods intended solely for restaurant/foodservice

Training initiatives for restaurant/foodservice

Enhanced research and monitoring

Supporting Strategies - Consumers

A nationally organized campaign, coordinated by Secretary of Health and Human Services

Educate consumers on:

- The risks of high blood pressure development across the lifespan
- The benefits of sodium reduction for all age groups
- The ubiquity of sodium in the food supply
- Sodium reduction in the context of an overall healthful diet

Consistent messages from stakeholders:

- Centers for Disease Control, National Institutes of Health, United States Department of Agriculture, Health practitioners, Health insurers, Schools, Food Industry

Interim Strategies

- Food manufacturers and restaurant/foodservice operators should voluntarily accelerate and broaden efforts to reduce sodium in processed foods and menu items
- The food industry, government, professional organizations, and public health partners should work together to promote voluntary collaborations (National Salt Reduction Initiative)

National Sodium Reduction Initiatives

Company	Plans to reduce sodium
PepsiCo	By 25% over next 5 years, in all products
Kraft	By 10% over next 2 years, in select products
ConAgra	By 20% over next 5 years
Campbell's Soup	By 35% in products; in past 4 years, reduced sodium in >100 products by 25-50%

Conclusions

The vast majority of the U.S. population is consuming sodium at levels that are too high to be “safe”

For the past 40 years, voluntary approaches have been attempted but have failed to reduce sodium intake

Innovative strategies to reduce sodium added to foods will create a level playing field for food manufacturers and restaurants, and maintain the flavor and taste of foods

Sponsors

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Food and Drug Administration
- National Institutes of Health: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
- Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Committee Membership

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Strategies to Reduce Sodium Intake in the United States

For more information:

www.iom.edu/sodiumstrategies



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