

Adults worldwide eat almost double daily AHA recommended amount of sodium

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Seventy-five percent of the world's population consumes nearly twice the daily recommended amount of sodium (salt), according to research presented at the American Heart Association's Nutrition, Physical Activity and Metabolism and Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention 2013 Scientific Sessions.

Global [sodium intake](#) from commercially prepared food, [table salt](#), salt and soy sauce added during cooking averaged nearly 4,000 mg a day in 2010.

The [World Health Organization](#) recommends limiting sodium to less than 2,000 mg a day and the [American Heart Association](#) recommends limiting sodium to less than 1,500 mg a day.

"This study is the first time that information about sodium intake by country, age and gender is available," said Saman Fahimi, M.D., M.Phil., lead author and a visiting scientist in the Harvard School of Public Health's epidemiology department in Boston, Mass. "We hope our findings will influence national governments to develop [public health interventions](#) to lower sodium."

Cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death in the world; excess sodium intake raises blood pressure. [High blood pressure](#) is one of the major contributors to the development of cardiovascular disease.

Among women and men, average sodium intake exceeded healthy levels in almost all countries, researchers said. Kazakhstan had the highest average intake at 6,000 mg per day, followed by Mauritius and Uzbekistan at just less than 6,000 mg per day.

Kenya and Malawi had the lowest average intake at about 2,000 mg per day. In the US, the average intake was about 3,600 mg a day.

One hundred eighty-one of 187 countries,

representing 99 percent of the world's population, exceeded the World Health Organization's recommended sodium intake of less than 2,000 mg a day; and 119 countries, representing 88 percent of the world's population, exceeded this recommended intake by more than 1,000 mg a day. All countries except Kenya exceeded the American Heart Association recommended sodium intake of less than 1,500 mg a day.

The researchers analyzed 247 surveys of adult sodium intake to estimate sodium intake, stratified by age, gender, region and nation between 1990 and 2010 as part of the 2010 Global Burden of Diseases Study, which is an international collaborative study by 488 scientists from 303 institutions in 50 countries around the world. .

Provided by American Heart Association

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