

High Sodium Warning Label: Why It Matters

The proposed rule would require chain restaurants to post warning labels for high sodium items on menus and menu boards.



Warning:  indicates that the sodium (salt) content of this item is higher than the total daily recommended limit (2,300 mg). High sodium intake can increase blood pressure and risk of heart disease and stroke.

Why was the rule proposed?

- High sodium intake is dangerous. It is linked to increased blood pressure and risk of heart disease and stroke.^{1,2}
- Leading scientific bodies recommend that no one's *daily* sodium intake exceed 2,300 mg.^{1,2}
- Sodium content of menu items in leading fast-food restaurants increased more than 20% from 1997 to 2010.³
- The majority of sodium in the American diet (77%) comes from restaurant and processed foods.⁴
- Roughly 10% of menu items sold in NYC chain food service establishments covered by the proposed rule have at least 2,300 mg of sodium and will require a warning label.⁵

Why does labeling matter?

- Evidence suggests that health warnings, like the proposed sodium warning, can increase knowledge and decrease purchase/consumption of certain products.⁶
- More than one million New Yorkers see calorie labels daily.⁷ Nearly 80% of New Yorkers reported that they are useful.⁸

▲ Restaurant and processed foods are the largest source of dietary sodium (77%).⁴

▲ The average NYC adult consumes about 3,200 mg of sodium every day, nearly 40% more than the recommended daily limit (2,300 mg).⁹



References

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