



## Limiting Salt Intake

**For Prelims:** WHO, Hypertension, Cardiovascular Diseases, Eat Right India Campaign, SDG, FSSAI.

**For Mains:** Need for Limiting Salt Intake.

### Why in News?

The [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) recommends a daily intake of less than 5 grams of salt for adults, but an average Indian's sodium consumption is more than double that amount.

- The WHO has set a goal for member states to reduce population sodium intake by 30% by 2025, but progress has been slow. India's sodium score of **2 out of 4 indicates the need for more rigorous efforts** to address this health concern.
- The WHO recently published the '**Global Report on Sodium Intake Reduction**,' which sheds light on the progress of its 194 member states towards reducing population sodium intake by 30% by 2025.

### What is the Need for Limiting Salt Intake?

- Excessive salt intake can have dangerous consequences such as [Hypertension](#), heart disease, and stroke.
- Reducing sodium intake is important because it is strongly correlated with lower blood pressure, which can lead to a **decrease in [Cardiovascular Diseases](#)**.
  - Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of **mortality worldwide and is responsible for a significant economic impact** on low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) such as India.
- Cardiovascular disease and hypertension are significant challenges in India due to several factors, including rising mortality rates, **higher prevalence in men, particularly in southern states**, and a large pre-hypertensive population.
- The [2020 Report on Medical Certification of the Cause of Death](#) shows that circulatory system diseases account for 32.1% of all documented deaths in India, with hypertension being a major risk factor.
- The World Economic Forum projects that the Indian economy alone faces losses surpassing USD 2 trillion between 2012 and 2030 because of cardiovascular disease.

### What are the Related Initiatives?

- **Eat Right India Campaign:**
  - It was launched by the [Food Safety and Standards Authority of India \(FSSAI\)](#), aiming to transform the Indian food system and ensure that everyone has access to safe, nutritious, and sustainable food.
- **Aaj Se Thoda Kam Campaign:**
  - FSSAI has initiated the 'Aaj Se Thoda Kam' social media campaign. Despite these efforts, the average sodium consumption of Indians remains alarmingly high. Studies have found

that the typical daily intake of sodium in India is around 11 grams, which is much higher than the recommended intake of 5 grams per day.

## Why is Salt Consumption Important?

- Salt as a Sodium chloride is an **essential nutrient that plays several important roles** in the body.
- Sodium is an electrolyte that **helps to regulate the balance of fluids in the body and aids in the transmission of nerve impulses** and muscle contractions.
- Salt consumption is important for maintaining proper bodily function, **but excessive intake can have negative health consequences**, making it important to consume salt in moderation.

## How can the Related Challenges be Addressed?

- India needs a **comprehensive national strategy to reduce salt consumption**, with a multi-pronged approach that engages consumers, industry, and the government. Collaboration between state and union governments is essential to **combat hypertension caused by excessive sodium intake**.
- Reducing sodium consumption has been identified as a **highly cost-effective strategy to prevent [Non Communicable Diseases \(NCDs\)](#)**, which are responsible for the majority of deaths worldwide.
  - A report suggests that implementing policies to reduce sodium consumption could save an **estimated seven million lives globally by 2030**.
- The sodium reduction policy is crucial to achieving the **[Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG\)](#)** of reducing deaths from NCDs.

**[Source: TH](#)**

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