

Most Americans consume too much sodium, not enough potassium

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A majority of Americans consume too much sodium and not enough potassium, according to a preliminary study presented at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2016.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Institutes of Health (NIH) researchers analyzed 24-hour urine excretions—the gold standard measure for [sodium intake](#)—from a sample of 827 U.S. adults, aged 20 to 69, participating in the 2014 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. This is the first nationally-representative estimate of U.S. sodium intake based on 24-hour urine excretions.

They found:

- Average daily sodium intake was 3,662 milligrams (mg).
- Intake was higher among men than women, but did not significantly differ by race or ethnicity, [body mass index](#) or physical activity level.
- Nearly 90 percent of participants consumed more than 2,300 mg of sodium, the upper level recommended by Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020.
- Average daily potassium intake was 2,202 mg and varied by sex and race-ethnicity.
- Women tended to have lower potassium levels than men and blacks tended to have the least potassium, versus whites who had the most.

Adequate potassium intake is 4,700 mg or more, suggesting Americans are not consuming enough in their diets.

Because of the health risks associated with excess sodium and inadequate potassium, monitoring intake is key to shaping effective dietary policies and interventions, researchers said.

For optimal heart-health, the American Heart Association recommends people aim to eat no more than 1,500 milligrams of [sodium](#) per day.

Provided by American Heart Association

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