

Communications Office

Peterborough County-City Health Unit
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www.pcchu.ca



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Recommendations from Sodium Reduction Strategy for Canada are a step in the right direction

Friday, July 30, 2010, Peterborough

Peterborough's Medical Officer of Health supports the recommendations released yesterday by the Sodium Reduction Strategy for Canada to reduce sodium intake of Canadians by half. "These recommendations are long overdue, are certainly welcome, but unfortunately don't go far enough to protect the public in what should be our next most important challenge, and that is, reducing sodium intakes," according to Dr. Rosana Pellizzari.

The overall goal of the newly announced strategy is to reduce sodium intake of Canadians to 2300 mg of sodium per day by 2016. The current average sodium intake of Canadians is estimated to be 3400 mg/d per day, double what we need. The majority of sodium found in the typical diet (88%) is added during food manufacturing or preparation (adding at the table or during cooking). The remaining 12% of sodium sources naturally occurs in food.

In general, the recommendations of the Sodium Reduction Strategy include:

- Voluntary reduction of sodium levels in processed food products and foods sold in food service establishments;
- Increased awareness and education of Canadians (including health professionals, media, education and government) on sodium and the new Sodium Reduction Strategy for Canada;
- Increased funding for research on sodium; and,
- Continued monitoring and evaluation of sodium intake.

Voluntary reductions of sodium by the food industry, as recommended, are a step in the right direction. However, evidence from other initiatives shows that legislation to

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support mandatory sodium reduction in our food supply would have been a more effective strategy.

Peterborough community members are invited to attend monthly supermarket tours led by a Public Health Nutritionist. "Supermarket tours provide a great hands on learning opportunity on how to make healthier food choices in the grocery store using Canada's Food Guide and Nutrition Facts Tables.", says Carolyn Doris PCCHU Public Health Nutritionist. "Tour evaluations consistently show that participants are surprised with the amount of sodium in processed foods on our grocery store shelves." For instance a convenience rice product can range from 0 mg to 590 mg of sodium in a half cup serving depending on the flavourings. Other foods high in sodium that consumers may not be aware of include breads, cereals, frozen entrees, soups and pasta sauces.

For more information about sodium content of foods visit www.sodium101.ca

To register for a free Supermarket Tour call the Canadian Diabetes Association at 742-2733.

For further information, please contact:

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