Excess sodium contributes to the development of hypertension, heart disease, and chronic kidney disease.

- High blood pressure increases the risk of heart attacks, stroke, and heart failure.\(^1\),\(^2\)
- Nine out of ten U.S. middle-aged adults will develop high blood pressure in their lifetimes.\(^3\)
- Heart disease is responsible for approximately one in every four deaths in the U.S., and it is the leading cause of death both nationally and internationally.\(^4\),\(^5\)
- Approximately 735,000 Americans have a heart attack every year.\(^6\)
- It is estimated that more than 20 million adults in the U.S. have chronic kidney disease, but the majority of cases are undiagnosed.\(^7\)
- Kidney failure cases have tripled since 1990.\(^8\)

Americans consume too much sodium.

- The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends consuming fewer than 2,300 milligrams (mg) sodium, or 1 teaspoon (tsp) of salt, each day, and the World Health Organization recommends consuming fewer than 2,000 mg of sodium, which is just under 1 tsp, a day for adults.\(^9\),\(^10\) Despite these recommendations, Americans consume more than 3,500 mg of sodium each day.\(^11\)
- More than three-quarters of the sodium Americans consume is from processed food or food purchased at restaurants.\(^12\)
- At least 40% of the sodium children consume is from the following foods: pizza, bread and rolls, cold cuts and cured meats, savory snacks, sandwiches, cheese, chicken patties and nuggets, pasta mixed dishes, Mexican mixed dishes, and soup.\(^13\)

High sodium costs the health care system billions of dollars.

- A reduction of average sodium intake to 2,300 mg of sodium (or 1 tsp of salt)/day is estimated to result in $18 billion health-care savings annually, and a further reduction to 1,500 mg/day could result in $26 billion of health-care savings.\(^14\)
- It is projected that the direct cost of heart disease will amount to more than $100 billion by 2030—a 190% increase from 2010.\(^15\)
- Health care costs associated with high blood pressure are estimated to reach $389 billion dollars by 2030.\(^16\)
- Kidney failure accounted for nearly $29 million of Medicare spending, approximately 6% of its budget in 2012. For adults aged 65 or older, chronic kidney disease accounted for approximately $45 billion.\(^17\)
References

8. Ibid.