

FDA to discuss salt content in foods

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The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has bowed to a long-standing request by scheduling a hearing on regulating the salt content of various foods.

The U.S. Center for Science in the Public Interest said it has been urging the FDA for nearly three decades to act on the issue "to help Americans avoid high blood pressure, stroke and heart disease by reducing dietary salt consumption."

The CSPI said it petitioned the FDA in 1978 to make good on its Reagan-era promises to press food companies to voluntarily reduce salt content in foods.

"Very few people dispute that Americans get way too much salt from processed and restaurant foods and that excess promotes hypertension, stroke, heart attacks, kidney failure, and early death," said CSPI Executive Director Michael Jacobson. "While the FDA has historically declined to challenge companies to lower high sodium levels, it is increasingly hard for FDA officials to ignore the calls to action made in recent years by the medical community."

Jacobson is among those scheduled to testify during a public hearing Thursday at the FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition facility in College Park, Md.

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