

Awareness of health implications of salt – February 2007

Topline Findings

From September to October 2004 the FSA ran an advertising campaign aimed at increasing awareness among the general public of the health implications of a high intake of salt. A second phase of the campaign ran in October/November 2005 focussing on the messages of checking the label on foods for salt content, and not to eat more than 6g of salt a day. A further burst of advertising ran from 10th July – 15th October 2006, showing a 10 second TV ad. The third phase of the campaign is due to begin 19th March 2007.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) placed questions relating to awareness and attitudes towards high salt intake on the RSGB face-to-face adults omnibus at the pre and post stages of the campaigns. A shorter set of questions has also regularly been placed on omnibus to track awareness of the health implications of eating too much salt. The omnibus interviews a nationally representative sample of adults 16+ in the United Kingdom.

The survey tracked awareness and attitudes among females, aged 35+, C1C2DE (primary target) up to April 2006. From June 2006, the primary target tracked was females, aged 35+, C1C2D. The secondary target was all adults.


The latest wave of tracking was in February 2007 (fieldwork 23rd-27th Feb). It was based on a representative sample of 1990 people. 479 interviews were conducted with the primary target audience (women 35+ C1C2D). This wave of tracking was placed on TNS CAPI Omnibus. This latest wave of tracking forms the pre-campaign wave of tracking before phase 3 of the campaign begins 19th March 2007.

Please note that figures for the post wave of the 2004 campaign evaluation, the pre and post waves of the 2005 campaign evaluation, and all figures from the April 2006 tracking onwards are based on a representative sample of adults in UK. Other waves are based on GB only.

This topline summary shows results for all adults and the primary target for all waves of tracking, including the pre and post campaign waves. Some additional questions were asked at the pre and post campaign evaluation waves which are not shown in this summary.

Shaded figures indicate significant differences, to the 95% confidence level, wave on wave:

 = significantly higher

 = significantly lower

Q 3 Which of the following, if any, are you making a special effort to cut down on in your diet?

Base: All adults

	All Adults																	
	Pre 04 Base: 1996	Post 04 Base : 2011	Jan 05 Base: 1894	Feb 05 Base : 1865	Mar 05 Base : 1918	May 05 Base: 1989	Jun 05 Base: 1995	Jul 05 Base : 1991	Sept 05 Base: 2015	Pre 05 Base: 1996	Post 05 Base : 1951	Feb 06 Base : 1956	Apr 06 Base : 1997	Jun 06 Base : 2001	Aug 06 Base : 2096	Oct 06 Base : 2046	Dec 06: Base: 2032	Feb 07: Base: 1990
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Fat	48	48	55	56	57	57	58	57	55	53	53	51	49	48	49	48	48	49
Salt	34	38	45	47	57	50	52	49	46	48	49	45	45	42	41	43	43	40
Sugar	33	35	46	49	54	53	53	51	50	50	49	46	40	42	40	43	40	40
None	30	30	25	24	20	23	23	24	25	26	27	30	31	31	33	35	32	31

Q4 How are you doing this? (unprompted) Base: All claiming to cut down on salt

Note: This question was asked at the pre and post campaign waves, and from September 05 onwards.

	All Adults											
	Pre 04	Post 04 Base: 780	Sept 05 Base: 942	Pre 05 Base: 967	Post 05 Base: 963	Feb 06 Base: 884	Apr 06 Base: 905	Jun 06 Base: 852	Aug 06 Base: 893	Oct 06 Base: 888	Dec 06 Base: 883	Feb 07 Base: 819
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Not adding salt when cooking	58	57	62	61	58	59	56	59	57	60	63	60
Not adding salt at the table	49	55	52	55	52	54	55	47	50	54	54	56

Not adding salt to food (unspecified)	18	22	20	21	18	29	25	23	23	23	21	24
Net: Any mention of not adding salt	89	91	91	90	86	88	87	87	87	87	89	90
Eating less processed food	13	14	17	15	14	17	14	12	14	18	13	12
Eating fewer ready meals	5	7	10	9	10	11	10	7	9	9	8	8
Buying lower salt products	8	8	11	11	9	13	13	10	11	12	10	11
Buying lo-salt products	11	10	13	11	10	11	11	10	9	11	8	10
Checking the labelling on products	na	na	13	8	13	14	11	11	15	15	13	13
Look at labelling on products	7	8	7	6	7	8	9	6	9	10	8	8
Net: Checking/look at labelling	na	na	15	11	16	16	16	14	18	19	16	15
Asking for /choosing low salt options when eating out	1	1	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	3	1	3
Asking for /choosing low salt options when eating out	*	2	1	1	1	4	2	1	2	3	1	1

Q8a Do you ever look at the labelling on the food you buy to find out about the salt content?

Base: All Adults

	All adults																	
	Pre 04 Base: 1996	Post 04 Base : 2011	Jan 05 Bas e: 189 4	Feb 05 Base : 1865	Mar 05 Base : 1918	May 05 Base: 1989	Jun 05 Base: 1995	Jul 05 Base : 1991	Sept 05 Base: 2015	Pre 05 Base : 1996	Post 05 Base : 1951	Feb 06 Base : 1956	Apr 06 Base : 1997	Jun 06 Base : 2001	Aug 06 Base : 2096	Oct 06 Base : 2046	Dec 06 Base : 2032	Feb 07 Base : 1990
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	29	31	38	41	40	42	39	39	34	34	35	38	36	38	41	41	43	40

Q9b Some of the salt in the average person's diet comes from salt people add themselves, and some of it comes from the salt already in the food that people buy.

What percentage of salt in the average person's diet do you think comes from salt that is already in the food people buy?

Base: All Adults

	Dec 06 All Adults Base: 2032	Dec 06 Primary Target Base: 478	Feb 07 All Adults Base: 1990	Feb 07 Primary Target Base: 479
	%	%	%	%
10%	6	5	6	6
20%	5	6	5	5
30%	6	7	6	7
40%	5	6	4	3
50%	8	10	8	11
55%	1	2	1	1
60%	6	5	5	2
65%	1	2	1	1
70%	7	5	7	7
75%	5	5	4	5
80%	5	5	6	5
85%	1	1	1	1
90%	4	3	3	3
95%	1	1	1	2
100%	2	*	2	2
Don't Know	37	36	37	39
LESS THAN 50%	22	24	22	21
50% OR MORE	41	39	40	39
75% OR MORE	16	15	18	17

Q10 Imagine you had two Imagine you had 2 packets of the same food next to each other; the label on 1 of the packets said that it contained 1g of salt, the label on the other packet said that it contained 1g of sodium. Which of the following do you think would apply?

Base: All Adults

	Dec 06 All Adults Base: 2032	Dec 06 Primary Target Base: 478	Feb 07 All Adults Base: 1990	Feb 07 Primary Target Base: 479
	%	%	%	%
Packet with 1g of salt contains more salt	14	13	14	12
Packet with 1g of sodium contains more salt	14	11	14	12
Both packets contain same amount of salt	54	58	56	59
Don't Know	18	17	16	18

Q.11 Which foods, if any, that you eat, do you think are high in salt? (unprompted)

Base: All Adults

	Dec 06 All Adults Base: 2032	Dec 06 Primary Target Base: 478	Feb 07 All Adults Base: 1990	Feb 07 Primary Target Base: 479
	%	%	%	%
Crisps	44	43	40	40
Ready Meals	30	29	25	25
Bacon	30	31	26	24
Cheese	14	14	11	14
Chips/fries	14	11	14	8
Ham	12	14	8	9
Pizza	12	11	9	9
Meat (unspecified)	8	7	6	7
Bread	3	3	4	3
Cereal/porridge	2	3	3	4
Tinned food	2	3	1	2
Processed food	1	3	1	2
None	10	12	9	12
Don't Know	10	10	12	13