



SENATOR THE HON BRETT MASON

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

15 May 2007

BM13/07

DROP THE SALT, DROP THE PRESSURE

Too much salt can increase blood pressure - the single greatest contributor to cardiovascular disease worldwide, the Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing, Senator Brett Mason, warned today.

Senator Mason was welcoming the launch of the *Drop the Salt!* campaign – which is based on strong evidence that consuming less salt lowers blood pressure and decreases the risk of heart attack and stroke.

“I am pleased that the Australian Division of World Action on Salt and Health (AWASH), hosted by the George Institute for International Health, is working with leading Australian non-government organisations and research groups to encourage less salt consumption through the campaign,” he said.

“The Australian Government recognises the significant health problems and costs linked with diet-related diseases.

“Australia’s dietary guidelines recommend choosing foods low in salt. Nutrient recommendations released in 2006 by the National Health and Medical Research Council advise reducing salt intakes to help prevent hypertension and cardiovascular disease.”

Senator Mason said that, “There is also likely to be a link between salt intakes and obesity, because high-salt foods tend to be high in fat and kilojoules.

“Over three quarters of our salt intake comes from processed foods, so it is pleasing that some industry groups have already begun to reduce the salt content in their products.

“The National Heart Foundation Tick Program has encouraged a number of Australian food manufacturers to reduce the salt in their foods. I encourage others to do the same.”

Media contact: Paul McGlew 0401 991487