GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health Urges the Community to Reduce Salt Intake

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The Ministry of Health and Social Development is encouraging residents to reduce their salt intake and make healthier food choices as the Territory observes Salt Awareness Week from May 12 to 18 and World Hypertension Day on May 17, 2026.

High salt intake is a major contributor to high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, which significantly increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease.

Public Health Nutritionist, Ms. Patrice Maduro, explained that many persons consume more salt than recommended, often without realizing it. “Salt is hidden in many processed foods, and excessive intake over time increases blood pressure, placing strain on the heart and kidneys,” Ms. Maduro said.

Hypertension is often called the “silent killer” because many persons do not experience symptoms until serious damage has occurred.

The Ministry is encouraging residents to follow the BVI Eat Well Guide, which promotes balanced meals and healthier food choices.

Residents are encouraged to:

• Reduce salt intake
• Read food labels
• Practice portion control
• Eat more fresh foods
• Check their blood pressure regularly

As part of the observance, the Ministry will be sharing educational flyers and public service announcements to promote healthier lifestyles.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development remains committed to protecting and promoting the health and social well-being of the people of the Virgin Islands through effective policies, sustainable programmes, and strategic partnerships that support a safe, healthy, and resilient society.

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