

# Salt

## What you should know: The Good, & Bad

A PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLE WRITTEN BY JENNIFER GRAHAM  
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"My doctor told me that salt can cause heart disease, and should be avoided. But why do they sell so many salt products in Health Food Stores?"

*In the 1980's, studies published by the American Heart Association demonstrated a link between sodium intake and heart disease. The main problem with salt is that we consume too much, and it is poor quality. However, in moderation salt plays a vital role for many functions of the body:*

1

### **Salt helps you stay Hydrated**

Sodium intake may be vitally important to stay hydrated in environments that combine heat and activity. Under these conditions, salt is lost through sweat leaving the body. If only water is replaced, the concentration of salt in the blood may remain too low to perform optimally, a condition called hyponatremia. To maintain the balance, hormones reduce the excretion of salt in the urine and sweat, while resisting the absorption of water, a process that may escalate into dehydration. Salt tablets or sports drinks (which contain salt) help to restore the sodium balance, and increase the absorption of water once again.

2

### **Salt regulates body temperature**

Salt helps us hold onto water, and water is needed for the sweating mechanism of temperature regulation. The "salt-water" pouches that line your skin are controlled by a surrounding basket of muscle cells that contract to squeeze sweat out when your body temperature gets too high. When the sweat evaporates into the air, it takes the body heat with it. Construction workers who labor outdoors on a sunny day often take salt pills to prevent overheating.

3

### **Salt improves digestion**

The Greeks were the first to discover the digestive powers of salt more than 2000 years ago. Salt is used to produce gastric juice (hydrochloric acid), which is excreted from the stomach to digest protein. Salt also stimulates bile production in the liver, which helps us digest fats. Today "mineralized" (salted) water products such as ENO are used to bring relief for many who suffer from the common causes of indigestion: acid reflux, heart burn, gas and bloating.

4

### **Salt Enhances Exercise**

Salt maintains conditions outside the muscle cell, and potassium maintains conditions inside the muscle cell. If the mineral conditions are balanced, salt propels the nerve impulses created during exercise to enter the muscle cell, helping it to contract, repair, and grow! If deficient in salt, muscle won't function as well, and injury may result.

We know that as a society, we consume too much salt, and it is causing health problems. However, there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that:

### **It is not the Salt that is the problem It is the *Condition* of the Salt**

In countries that do not alter their salt supply, incidences of heart disease and arthritis are practically unheard of. Natural salt is harvested from the crystalline deposits remaining from the four-and-a-half million miles of ocean that once covered the earth. It is pink in color, and contains 84 elements that our bodies need to function. Table salt is white because it has been cleaned to the point where only about 3 of the 84 vital elements remain!

#### **The Salt Detective Experiment:**

To see the difference that salt makes, try the following experiment:

Put a spoonful of salt in a glass overnight.

If you find the salt in the glass the next morning:

***Your salt has been processed***

If there is no salt in the bottom of the glass:

***Your salt is natural***

#### **Conclusion:**

The experiment demonstrates how natural salt dissolves, whereas processed salt collects in your body - just as it did in the glass!

Consumed in excess, processed salt collects in the organs and tissues, leading to the malfunction of various body processes, and eventually leading to: heart disease, arthritis, atherosclerosis, and even calcium deposits. However, natural salt can actually dissolve calcium deposits, and may help prevent many of the conditions above! This is why it has received popularity in health food stores.

#### **TAKE HOME POINTS ON SALT:**

1. Use natural salt instead of processed table salt.
2. Taste your food before you add salt, you may not need it!
3. Limit high salt foods such as soups, canned food, fast food, salty snacks, and processed meat.
4. Add salt *after* cooking. It will be more powerful, requiring you to use less.
5. Instead of adding salt, use foods that naturally impart a salty taste, such as celery, carrots, parsley, chard, spinach, kale, shellfish, beets, artichokes, and kelp.

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