



Hands of Health Newsletter

November/December 2010

Hello, again:

Here it is, the end of the year; already. And with the distraction, if you will, of the holiday season and all that decadent food, we tend to become lax about taking care of our health. But we ALWAYS need to make our health a number one priority. You must continue to exercise, eat well (while imbibing in all those special holiday foods) and getting in regularly for your massage. Regular therapeutic bodywork sessions will help you control the stress and hustle and bustle of the holidays enhancing the quality of your holiday season celebrations. Remember, it's easier to maintain your health than it is to get healthy to begin with. So get ahead of the game and start preparing for the holidays NOW!

Here is part two of the article on salt I started in the last issue of my newsletter. If you missed it it's on my website www.hands-of-health.com in the newsletter section; obviously.

AVOIDING THIS "FORBIDDEN FOOD" COULD MAKE YOU MOODY- Part II

By Dr. Mercola

Current Sodium Recommendations

The American Heart Association has suggested limiting your sodium consumption to fewer than 1,500 mg per day to decrease your risk for high blood pressure, stroke and weight gain.

The CDC reports less than ten percent of adults are meeting this limit, and some studies have suggested many Americans are consuming more than 7,000 mg of salt per day, which is the equivalent of approximately 3 teaspoons of table salt.

The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition considers a product high in sodium if it contains more than 500 milligrams per 100 gram serving. Similarly, it considers a product low in sodium if it contains less than 120 milligrams per 100 grams.

The foods highest in sodium tend to be processed meats, which often contain a whopping 800 mg per 100 gram serving!

It probably makes sense to limit your intake of refined processed salts to these levels. However, if you are healthy your body should be able to easily tolerate much higher levels of unprocessed salts.

The only exception would be for those who have heart failure and are very sensitive to fluid overload. Those with congestive heart failure (CHF) will typically be on a number of different drugs to improve cardiac function.

So those with established CHF should maintain strict sodium restrictions but should also look into the many effective natural options out there like ubiquinol which has been shown to be highly effective in improving those with lowered cardiac ejection fractions.

Why are Processed Foods so Loaded With Sodium?

At one time, salting was one of the few ways people could preserve foods. Salt kills bacteria that can cause food to spoil.

But today, between chemical preservatives and refrigeration, salt is added for other reasons — and it's added to processed foods in HUGE amounts. The reason for this has more to do with the fact that salt is an inexpensive way to improve the taste of overcooked, bland, nutrient-butchered carnage in a can that some people call food.

Salt is used in high amounts in lunchmeats and cheeses to extend shelf life. Sodium also helps bind ingredients together and acts as a stabilizer.

Besides sodium chloride, sodium is also a component of other ingredients you will find on your labels, further driving up your sodium level:

- * Monosodium glutamate (MSG)
- * Baking soda (sodium bicarbonate)
- * Sodium benzoate
- * Sodium nitrate
- * Sodium saccharin

Hypertension Is Driven More by Excess SUGAR than Excess Salt

While I certainly agree you should not consume large quantities of refined processed salt, just switching to low-sodium foods — especially those in a box or a can — is not going to get you very far toward your health goals.

There are other factors that control fluid and electrolyte balance, blood pressure, kidney disease, obesity and cardiovascular disease.

For example, one of the greatest revelations of late is the link between fructose consumption and hypertension. Uric acid is a byproduct of fructose metabolism, and increased uric acid levels drive up your blood pressure. The amount of salt people in this country are consuming pales in comparison to the amount of fructose they are eating on a daily basis, yet the AMA issues no warnings about this.

I believe that sugar/fructose consumption is the major driving force behind our ever-increasingly elevated blood pressures.

Can Your Sodium be Too LOW?

You may not be aware of this, but you have an increased risk for health problems if your sodium is too low (hyponatremia). For example:

* A 2009 study of large-bone fractures in the elderly found the incidence of hyponatremia in patients with fractures was MORE THAN DOUBLE that of non-fracture patients. They postulated the reason for the sodium deficiency might have been the use of selective serotonin receptor inhibitors (SSRIs), a type of antidepressant drugs.

* A 1995 study by the AMA published in the journal Hypertension found low urinary sodium associated with an increased risk of heart attack.

Changes in mood and appetite are among the first noticeable manifestations of sodium deficiency, since salt is a natural antidepressant.

And the preponderance of evidence proves that sodium intake does NOT affect blood pressure unless you are especially sodium-sensitive.

Salt as Nature Intended It: Himalayan Crystal Salt

The more you can move toward a diet of whole foods in their natural state, the healthier you'll be — whether it's veggies, meat, dairy products, or salt. If you are a protein type, you will need more salt than your fellow carbohydrate types.

Given that salt is absolutely essential to good health, I highly recommend switching to my favorite unrefined salt, an all-natural source from the Himalayas.

This salt is very special — it is completely pure, having spent many thousands of years maturing under extreme tectonic pressure, far away from exposure to impurities, so it isn't polluted with the heavy metals and industrial toxins of today. And it's minimally processed — hand-mined and hand-washed.

Himalayan salt contains 84 trace minerals from our prehistoric seas, and its crystalline structure actually stores vibrational energy, which is restorative to your body.

The crystal salt from the Himalayas does not burden your body as refined salts do.

It is very difficult for your body to absorb too much crystal salt since there are effective feedback loops that regulate this process. Natural crystal salt always promotes a healthful balance and does not contribute to high blood pressure like refined table salt.

And it's the most delicious salt you'll ever find!

Not only is Himalayan salt nutritionally beneficial and delicious, but it also has several great healing applications when used topically:

* Bath Soak: As a "brine bath," it is stimulating and even moisturizing to your skin, as well as detoxifying. Use a 1 percent concentration, which is equal to your natural body fluids (add about 2.6 pounds of salt to an average tub of water). Soak for 15 to 20 minutes, and do not shower off—just blot with a towel.

* Salt Sole: Sole simply means a supersaturated saltwater solution (about 8 percent salt), and with this you can treat a number of skin conditions, including itching and rashes.

* Sinus Flush: Mix with pure water in a neti pot a 1 percent solution (normal saline) with warm water for a beneficial sinus or allergy treatment; use 1 gram per 100ml (one-fifth teaspoon in 3.34 ounces lukewarm water).

* Eye rinse: The same 1 percent solution rejuvenates tired or irritated eyes.

* Throat gargle: To treat a cold or sore throat, gargle with a 1 percent saltwater solution (but don't swallow).

Sources:

Bloomberg News June 24, 2010

Related Links:

Should Salt No Longer Be Generally Recognized as Safe?

Is Salt Nature's Antidepressant?

Take the Latest Low Sodium Advice With a Grain of Salt

I wish you all the best healthy and happy holiday season. Please party hearty, no drinkin' and drivin', and have a super New Year's. Remember, you can show your loved ones how much you care with a gift certificate for massage whether it's Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Christmas, Kwanza, or anything else you and yours might celebrate during the next two months or so. Maybe someone's birthday is coming up or you have employees who you want to show your appreciation for. This is a great way to do so. Call me, come by the office or I can take your orders over the phone. If you want me to mail them to you be sure and give me enough notice so I can get them to you on time. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Until next time,

Stay healthy, stay well,



*"You don't need massage for the rest of your life,
only for as long as you want to be healthy."*

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