

Food salt essential to life, health

A growing body of research shows salt is GOOD for you

Live. Your body needs salt. You can't produce your own sodium or chloride, and salt (sodium chloride) is required for blood, sweat, digestive juices and efficient nerve transmission.

Live longer. A Journal of the American Medical Association [study](#) showed people with the lowest levels of sodium died earlier than people who ate average amounts of salt.

Live smarter. If pregnant mothers and children eat sufficient salt, they exhibit improved cognitive function; if they eat iodized salt, they are protected from iodine deficiency diseases, the world's leading cause of mental retardation.

Live nutritiously. Cruciferous vegetables – a.k.a. “super veggies” – are bitter, but they can become [tasty](#) with salt. These are the vegetables your mother made you eat: broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, kale, and cabbage.

Live naturally. Salt is a natural food ingredient with no calories.

.... but LOW-salt diets may HARM you

Low-salt danger zone. A [study](#) in the Journal of the American Medical Association shows a low-salt zone where stroke, heart attack and death are more likely. The government's low-salt U.S. Dietary Guidelines drop Americans right into the middle of that danger zone.

Diabetes. A [Harvard study](#) linked low-salt diets to an immediate onset of insulin resistance, a precursor to Type 2 Diabetes. Another [study](#) showed people with Type 2 diabetes are more likely to die prematurely on a low-salt diet.

Renin, cholesterol, triglycerides. A [study](#) in the American Journal of Hypertension found that people on low-salt diets developed higher levels of renin, cholesterol and triglycerides.

Falls, cognitive problems, among elderly. Elderly people with LOW sodium, a condition called hyponatremia, have more [falls and broken hips](#) and a [decrease in cognitive abilities](#).

Sources: Appetite: J Geerling, et al (2008); Live longer: K Stolarz-Skrzypek, et al. (2011); Nutritiously: J.K. Balitsis (2008); Danger: J. O'Donnell, et al (2011); Diabetes: R Garg, et al. (2011); E Ekinci, et al. (2011); Falls: B. Renneboog, et al. (2006); Flicker, et al. (2005); Renin: A Graudal, et al. (2011), Death: HW Cohen, et al. (2008). **Updated: 12/23/2011**



ABOUT THE SALT INSTITUTE: The Salt Institute is a North American based non-profit trade association dedicated to advancing the many benefits of salt, particularly to ensure winter roadway safety, quality water and healthy nutrition.