

## SALT:

Is it Really Bad For You?

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For years, American diets have been influenced by many “expert” recommendations. I remember such advice as to cut out butter and use margarine because it was high in “poly-unsaturates.” After all, that nasty butter would clog your arteries, right? How times have changed! Now, the discussion is about bad “trans” fatty acids - the culprit: (you guessed it) margarine.

Salt is another food that came under scrutiny several decades ago. After all, it caused high blood pressure. So, Americans cut salt out of the diet. Did high blood pressure decrease? No. And “experts” again sheepishly admit that reduction of sodium (the chemical name for salt) did not improve blood pressure.

Let’s review the facts: Sodium is a nutrient. All nutrients and biochemical building blocks must exist in a balance.

If sodium levels are high and potassium levels are low, an imbalance exists. That imbalance could lead to high blood pressure, among other conditions.

Rarely are doctors concerned about low sodium. Here are some of the symptoms of sodium deficiency:

- Fatigue
- Depression
- Constipation
- Low immunity
- Poor circulation (can’t cool off or warm up)
- Muscle pains (especially when combined with low calcium, magnesium and/or potassium)
- Impaired blood-sugar metabolism

I have seen this many times in my office and am specially amazed at how well people respond to proper nutritional therapy.

Bottom line: If salt tastes good to you, use it! Your body is telling you it needs it! If it doesn’t, get your salt levels tested. It may still be low (and you may need it) or it may be high (and you need to properly metabolize it). Either way, the balance of this nutrient will be a big healthy plus for your life.