

As we know, salt is the most useful resource found on earth. In Ancient Rome, salt was used as part of the salary to the soldiers. From this, we can see that salt was as valuable as gold in the past.

In our daily life, besides making nutritious food more palatable, salt is very useful in making bakery products, canned and frozen foods. Salt is a good preservative that retards the growth of micro-organisms to make food storage possible for a long period of time before refrigeration.

Recently, an opinion that is harmful to our health was raised by Dr. Arthur Hull Hayes, Jr., former commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 1981. The American Heart Association, the American Medical Association also joined the low-salt appeal. They believe that sodium salt is connected with heart disease, circulatory disorder, stroke and even early death.

By many doctors and researchers are now beginning to feel that salt has gone too far. At the University of Alabama, a short-term research has been done on 150 people on the effect of the intake of salt related to high blood pressure. Result shows that those with normal blood pressure experience no change at all when placed in an extremely low salt diet, or later when salt was introduced. Of the hypertensive subjects, half of those on the low salt diet did experience a drop in blood pressure, which returned to its previous level when salt was introduced.

Of course, these are other researchers who tend to support the findings. A small Indiana study showed that when normal individuals took large amount of salt, the blood pressure did not consistently rise into the hypertensive range. Also, study in Israel showed that a low-calorie diet could reduce blood pressure without changing salt consumption. After viewing research statistics, we should know that salt is not exactly harmful to us. In fact, our bodies have a continual need for salt because our bodies need sodium and chloride ions each with a different task.

Chloride maintains the balance of water in cells and its environment. It also plays a part of digestion. Sodium assists in regulating the volume of blood and blood pressure. Also, it facilitates the transmission of nerve impulses and is necessary for heart and muscle contraction. Without this, our bodies could not function properly. On our diets, how much salt is too much?? Medical experts agree with the daily intake of salt for normal person should be around 4 to 10 grams a day. But those with kidney problem may have to limit dietary salt, if their doctor advises.

The cause of hypertension consists of a number of factors. Such as deficiencies in calcium, potassium and obesity. In conclusion, salt restriction may harm more people than it helps. Unless your doctor has proven that you have a salt related health problem, there is no reason to give salt up!!

