

Can Salt Make You Life Better

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The answer to this question, according to "conventional medical wisdom," is a resounding NO! But the real answer, according to Dr. David Brownstein, M.D., author of *Salt Your Way To Health*, and many other leading experts, is that the right kind of salt can make your life better! This means that the term "conventional medical wisdom" may be somewhat of an oxymoron. You will have to decide for yourself. As with many other issues relating to health, the "wisdom" in today's "conventional" medicine has gotten lost along the way. The controversy regarding salt is a prime example.

To illustrate the way that salt can make your life better, let's look at a problem that affects much of our population. Millions of people suffer with Adrenal Fatigue. In my practice, Adrenal Fatigue affects at least 90% of people that I see. Adrenal Fatigue is a problem because so much of the rest of your body is dependent upon your body's adrenal glands operating correctly, both when everything is going right, and when they are called upon in "fight or flight" situations.

Does Adrenal Fatigue affect you? Are you easily aggravated? Do you have problems with decision-making, cloudy thinking, drug abuse, alcohol overuse, or burnout? Do you feel like you could be near a "nervous breakdown", are short fused, or have problems, such as absenteeism from work or school? Do you find yourself being aggravated by other people, or find yourself aggravating even to you? If you answered yes to any of these questions, think about doing something to help yourself right away. Conditions like these usually only get worse when they are ignored. Do you have any physical symptoms, such as salt cravings, increased thirst, muscle weakness, heart problems (i.e. an irregular heartbeat or a decreased force of contractions), lethargy and light-headedness upon standing?

Most people do not realize that their salt cravings are actually part of a wonderfully designed system in our body. Stressed out people end up driving through fast food restaurants and snacking on salty, processed foods in an unsatisfying attempt to satisfy their body's need for salt. But getting large amounts of salt this way is like getting a temporary life preserver. It is a vicious and unhealthy cycle because the processed salt that they are getting through these unhealthy foods is not what their body actually needs. According to the book, *Adrenal Fatigue* by Dr. James L. Wilson, N.D., D.C., PhD., our bodies need a specific 15 to 1 ratio of Sodium to Potassium. Table salt is 98% sodium and no potassium. So, is salt our friend or is salt our foe? What in the world changed?

A short review of the salt industry explains how our world started changing and why. Salt has been used to make things as long as people of ingenuity have been around. From metal working to livestock, there is little that does not involve salt. There are many valuable minerals in salt; and this is where the salt story gets interesting.

The salt industry saw the potential to "double dip" on profits from the removal of the minerals from the salt. These minerals could be sold separately from sodium chloride, which is the major component of salt. As the salt industry started profiting, the definition of salt was changed to reflect the new ratio of the components in salt. The new processed salt was advertised as being pretty and clean, just like the little girl on the front of one of the most popular brands. However, this new salt was actually a waste product; it was what was left over after the minerals were extracted. The minerals that were removed are the very ones that our bodies need to be healthy, so you can start to see how this change has led to problems.

Unprocessed, natural salt, complete with the mineral ratios intact, is needed to balance fluids within the cells of our bodies and surrounding tissues under our skin. The new salt, devoid of minerals, dehydrates our cells and doesn't let our kidneys express out the excess fluids. The result is that our blood becomes loaded with water

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and sodium, forcing blood pressure to go up.

How does this relate to Adrenal Fatigue? When under stress, our adrenal glands produce a hormone called Cortisol, which stimulates the production of ACTH (adrenalcorticotrophic hormone), which in turn causes the production of another hormone called aldosterone. The craving for salt is a direct result of your body lacking aldosterone, the hormone that controls the fluid and electrolytes levels (salts) in your body. If you suffer from even moderately severe Adrenal Fatigue, you need to re-hydrate carefully so that your blood sodium does not become even more diluted, which would lead to feeling worse, rather than better. Since many of the physiological reactions in our bodies depend upon the flow or concentration of electrolytes, keeping the proper fluid balance within our cells is very important to our health.

What else can you do if you have cravings for salt and suspect that you have Adrenal Fatigue? To start with, eat real, unprocessed salt; Celtic Salt has always tested the strongest with my patients. There are only a small number of people who should not eat salt as they have a reaction to it. If you have high blood pressure, get a blood pressure cuff and keep track of it as you try real, unprocessed salt. If your pressure goes over 140/90, cut back. This is the marker according to some experts. Make a concoction of sea salt and ground kelp and sprinkle it on your food. Put anywhere from a dash to a teaspoon of salt in your water. Coffee and alcohol are hard on your adrenals, so you should avoid them. Choose as much organic food as you can because it is cleaner and less stressful for your body to process. Find the good in everything and everybody you can. Remember, much of life is how you choose to live it. Be aware of your perceptions and the ways in which you interpret your perceptions as they influence both your world and the rest of the world around you. With every choice you make, you can make the world a better place to live.

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Dr. William H. Karl, D.C., is a Brimhall Certified Wellness Doctor with over 27 years of experience, an extensive knowledge of the human body, and a keen interest in applying new and advanced techniques - all of which enable him to provide the finest care possible for each and every one of his patients! To read other articles by Dr. Karl, learn about techniques used in his office, or to sign up for a free monthly newsletter visit www.KarlHolisticHealthCare.com or call (734) 425-8220.