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# Salt Really Does Boost Health Risks

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HealthDay News

Updated: 9:01 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 26, 2009

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It's known that eating a lot of salt puts people at greater risk of high blood pressure. Now there's confirmation of a corollary: High salt intake also translates to significantly greater risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

A review published in the Nov. 25 online edition of *BMJ* found that a difference of just 5 grams of regular daily salt intake spells a 23 percent difference in the rate of stroke and a 17 percent difference in the rate of cardiovascular disease.

According to the review, the World Health Organization recommends that people consume only 5 grams -- about a teaspoon -- of salt each day. But people in the West typically eat around 10 grams a day, and those in Eastern Europe consume even more.

The review authors analyzed 13 studies, involving more than 170,000 people, that assessed the link between salt and cardiovascular disease and stroke.

The researchers estimated that reducing daily salt intake by 5 grams around the world could prevent more than 1 million stroke deaths and nearly 3 million deaths from cardiovascular disease each year. And because it's hard to measure salt intake, those numbers could actually be even higher, the authors noted.

### More information

Learn more about salt from the American Heart Association.

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