

# Salty Lives

Information for a low salt lifestyle

by Alison Cullen



## How to Use Herbal Remedies Safely

This guidebook is not intended to replace medical advice. You should consult a Healthcare Professional if you have any condition which is of concern. For safe, effective results when taking herbal remedies, follow the guidelines below.

If the product you have has an in-pack leaflet then you should follow the instructions and advice on the leaflet and product packaging.

If the product does not come with an in-pack leaflet then you should follow the instructions and advice on the product packaging. The following general advice also applies to products with no in-pack leaflet.

- If there is any doubt as to the nature of the problem please consult your Doctor for a diagnosis.
- Do not use when pregnant or breastfeeding unless under the supervision of a Healthcare Professional.
- Do not use for children under 2 years of age unless under the supervision of a Healthcare Professional.
- Do not exceed stated doses.
- Do not use alongside medication with the same action eg. a calming herb alongside tranquillizing medication.
- Do not take more than 3 herbal remedies concurrently.
- Stop taking herbal remedies 14 days before surgery.

We are always being told to cut down on our salt intake but why is this important?

- ✿ **Do you feel unjustifiably tired?**
- ✿ **Do you suffer from fluid retention?**
- ✿ **Is your blood pressure higher than you would like?**
- ✿ **Do you suffer from arthritis, rheumatism, gout or osteoporosis?**

If so, you may benefit from reducing the amount of salt in your diet.

Our body needs a specific balance of minerals to operate efficiently and make us feel well. Too much of one mineral, such as the sodium found in salt, upsets that balance and can lead to some of the symptoms above.

## What is salt?

Salt is **sodium chloride**. The mineral sodium is actually **useful to the body in the correct amounts**, but too much can cause trouble.

## Why do we need it?

Sodium helps with keeping **fluid** (eg. water) correctly balanced in the body and with conducting **nerve impulses** (sending messages along nerve pathways). We can get sodium from natural foods in the small amounts we need, but taking too much salt can lead to trouble for our bodies.

## So how much salt should we have daily?

The **maximum amount of salt that adults should have daily is 6 grams**, according to UK government recommendations; but the **average adult is likely to get about 9 grams** – obviously clocking up an extra third of the recommended amount every day. To add to the concern, USA recommendations are lower – **3.8 grams of salt daily**, with a **tolerable upper limit of 5.8 grams**. People suffering from hypertension, diabetes or kidney disease should be particularly careful to consume less than the upper limit, as they will be more sensitive to the adverse effects of having too much salt. Some ethnic groups are more sensitive to salt than others – African-Caribbean people are extremely prone to high blood pressure, for example.

**Many of our modern foods are quite heavily salted. As much as 75% of our daily salt intake may come from processed foods<sup>1</sup>. Let's look at some of the things we typically eat these days.**

**Salt is often listed as sodium chloride. To work out salt content multiply sodium content by 2.5.**

## A typical modern day's diet

Values given are mg of sodium per 100g food portion

Breakfast	
Cornflakes	most commercial cereals contain between 700 and 1,100mg
Toast	bread contains between 300 and 500mg
Salted butter	826mg
Lunch	
Cheese sandwich	bread as before, cheddar cheese contains 620mg
Crisps	up to 1,000mg
Dinner	
Pork sausage	958mg
Potatoes, mashed and salted	331mg
Salted butter	1,042mg
Doughnuts	500mg



By the way, babies' kidneys can't cope with salt at all – human breast milk, which is what they are designed to take in for the first few months of their lives, doesn't contain high levels of sodium, so if they are given foods containing salt they are likely to become extremely ill!

## So what's the problem with too much salt?

As there is usually a great deal of sodium outside the cell, trying to get in, a cellular pump is constantly pumping sodium out of the cell. It takes lots of energy to do this – like constantly **bailing water out of a leaky boat**. It's harder to do it when we're tired or not getting enough sleep; but unfortunately if we let more sodium into the cell we become increasingly tired and therefore less able to operate the pump – it's one of those vicious circles that make life so tiresome sometimes.

### What happens when we have all this salt then?

- We get fluid retention
- We are more likely to suffer coronary disease and possibly strokes
- We will develop an acidic internal environment and will therefore be prone to arthritic complaints, osteoporosis and nervous tension
- Our blood pressure goes up
- We may be more fatigued than seems fair
- We may experience lower back pain as our kidneys struggle to deal with the increased load of sodium

## How do we avoid having too much salt?

- Don't add salt to food during cooking or when serving. Processed foods usually contain salt already.
- Taste food before adding salt to it.
- **Eat foods that have not been processed**, or at least check the amount of salt that has been added to any processed foods you eat. Avoid foods that are obviously heavily salted such as crisps and salted nuts.
- If you need to add salt, **use low-salt versions** of table salt.

## Alternatives to table salt

The **Herbamare Range** is designed to tantalise the taste buds with the tang of herbs. Due to the flavoursome taste of Herbamare you need smaller amounts compared to table salt, so you use less and consume less sodium.

The **Herbamare Range** is made with a combination of organically grown herbs and vegetables, combined with sea salt when freshly harvested to capture their full flavour and piquancy.





## The Herbamare Range comprises

 **Herbamare Original** Containing salt steeped in herbs, this condiment brings the full savour of the Kitchen Garden to your cooking, allowing you to adapt to a herbal taste.

 **Herbamare Spicy** Chilli and pepper are added to this variety of Herbamare, giving it zest for those with an adventurous taste in flavouring.

 **Herbamare Diet** For those wanting to avoid sodium chloride completely, this is the ideal alternative to table salt. Potassium chloride takes the place of the usual sodium chloride, producing a salt alternative that still contains the full flavour of organic herbs but no actual sodium content.

The **Herbamare Range** can be used in cooking or on the table just as any other salt.

Celery leaves, leek, watercress, garden cress, onion, chive, parsley, lovage, garlic, basil, marjoram, rosemary, thyme and kelp are the fresh organic herbs to be found in the **Herbamare Range**.



## Keeping a healthy balance

- Taking **potassium-containing foods** reduces the adverse effect of **salt**; but very few people eat lots of potassium-containing foods, and many people eat almost none.
- Eat lots of vegetables – buy them fresh and cook them without adding salt. Your taste buds will adapt to the gorgeous taste of unsalted vegetables.
- Avoid drinking heaps of coffee to ensure that it doesn't block the absorption of the potassium you put into your body through eating all these lovely vegetables. **Drink at least 1.5 litres of still water daily.**
- Avoid nicotine because it deadens your taste buds so that you need more salt (and sugar) before you can taste things.
- If you've been prone to fluid retention, take a tincture of dandelion root, traditionally used for a natural diuretic effect without depleting the body of potassium.
- If you regularly suffer from lower back ache, and know that your salt intake has been high and your water intake low, try taking an extract of solidago, which has been traditionally used to help support the kidneys. Other symptoms that can be helped by this remedy are puffy eyes when waking, puffy fingers and ankles developing during the day, and general fatigue – all signs of dehydration and unhappy kidneys. Do drink lots of water though – these remedies can't work if you're still dehydrated!



#### Foods that are rich in potassium include:

Artichoke, asparagus, black beans, lima beans, kidney beans, pinto beans, black-eyed beans, brussel sprouts, cabbage, lettuce, lentils, mushrooms, parsnips, spinach, sweet potato, Swiss chard, tomatoes, sunflower seeds, almonds, raisins, bananas, dried apricots, avocados, dates, figs, kiwi fruit, mango, nectarines, papaya and prunes.

#### For Real

Bill was shocked to discover that he had quite high blood pressure, despite only being in his early 30s. Acting on the advice of a naturopath, he reduced his salt intake and started drinking 2 litres of still water daily. After a few days of rushing to the loo, he found that he wasn't peeing more than anyone else, and drinking that amount of water was easy – sometimes he had more, feeling more awake and energetic for it. After a couple of weeks, his blood pressure was down, to his delight. After a couple of months he found he'd painlessly lost weight too, as an added bonus!





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