

SaltGuru Video Transcript

Episode – 9 Science, salt and health

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▶ Hi, my name is Mort Satin and I am the Salt Guru.

As the first decade of the new millennium comes to a close the salt and health debate continues to evolve with more and more real scientific evidence bringing far greater precision and understanding to the issue. Yet, despite this growing clarity, can we expect the Government and its bureaucratic health institutions to act upon the science?

I don't think so.

History is filled with examples of Governments following false illusions rather than genuine scientific evidence.

About 150 years ago, right after Pasteur discovered the cause of spoilage and disease, everyone knew his process could be used to kill the bacteria in milk that were responsible for diphtheria, typhoid fever and brucellosis. Instead, of acting upon the evidence Government bureaucrats criticized the process. They invented the rumor that pasteurization would encourage the industry to sell dirty milk; they even denied that milk transmitted diseases. New York City, so often a center for foolish policies, decided to outlaw milk pasteurization in 1906, setting back the process a decade, resulting in the needless deaths and illnesses of thousands of children. State health authorities were against it and decided to medically inspect and certifying milk production instead. Unfortunately, bacteria don't understand politics and continued to infect thousands of children. You can read all about the history of pasteurization in two of my books, "[Food Alert](#)" and "[Death in the Pot.](#)"

Eventually, the growing public outrage forced the government to recognize the overwhelming evidence supporting pasteurization and by the 1920's, pasteurization was instituted throughout the United States and Canada and was compulsory in most large cities. Unfortunately, politicians, bureaucrats and activists delayed it much longer in many other parts of the world. For instance, in Britain, that paragon of bad food and second-rate nutrition, pasteurization was [delayed until the mid-1950s and Scotland delayed it until 1983!](#) How many children died needlessly because of the government bureaucrats in the countries were so behind the science?

For more than a decade, government health authorities, anxious for a quick fix to the growing rates of hypertension jumped upon salt reduction as the

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remedy. No matter that there was no evidence linking salt consumption to the increasing rates of hypertension, the notion held all the elements for the big lie. Many of us have on occasion eaten a salty meal and experienced a temporary sensation of pressure. Of course, this always fades away, particularly if you drink a lot of water, but many people mistake take this phenomenon for hypertension. So here was a misperception that the bureaucrats thought they could exploit. People were also eating more and more convenience foods, always characterized as full of salt, sugar and fat – another element to add to the growing myth. To top things off, many doctors had, for years, recommended lowered salt intake for hypertensive patients, even though benefits were minimal. All told, it was a very convenient yarn to sell to the public – even though it was totally lacking in evidence.

Through a process of bureaucratic self-hypnosis, the idea of salt reduction [evolved from compulsion to an obsession](#). The Institute of Medicine led the way with its 2005 publication, "[Dietary Reference Intakes for Water, Potassium, Sodium, etc.](#)" Even though it stated (page 270) that there was not enough scientific evidence to establish the human requirements for sodium, they went ahead and did it anyway and arbitrarily set the level of 1,500 mg sodium as the adequate intake – just like that - the same for the upper limit of 2,300 mg per day for sodium. No matter that there wasn't a shred of evidence to support these figures, they became the establishment dogma. It was no different from saying that the sun revolved around the earth – all dogma – no scientific evidence.

The government's obsession ballooned into an international call for action on population-wide salt reduction. Again, New York got onto the act with the mayor calling for a [National Salt Reduction Program](#) and [one state assemblyman calling for a total ban on salt](#). It's easy to picture the scene 100 years earlier when [New York banned milk Pasteurization](#).

Totally absent from the debate were the facts that countries such as Switzerland and Japan, which consume the greatest amount salt, enjoy the greatest longevity, while those that consume the least, have the lowest life expectancy. Mediterranean diets – long proven to be the best in the world for cardiovascular health, [contain 40% more salt than the typical "American" diet](#).

[Despite these facts, the government anti-salt activists continued to promote salt reduction](#). However, as the research continues to pour in, it is clear that salt consumption is unrelated to hypertension and salt reduction can cause some very negative health outcomes.

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In a recent paper published in the [American Journal of Clinical Nutrition](#), [Adam Bernstein and Walter Willett](#), the most respected nutritionist in the country, found that the amount of sodium consumed by Americans in the last 40 years has remained unchanged, while the rates of hypertension and obesity have increased. This result shows that salt consumption is not related to the increase in hypertension. If sodium was not connected to the rising rates of hypertension, what is the reason for setting limits on sodium? The big lie, carefully concocted by the government bureaucrats was beginning to unravel.

Another recent publication, this time from Harvard's Medical School, stated unequivocally, [that healthy people who are placed on low salt diets, immediately develop insulin resistance – the precursor to diabetes](#), while those on a regular salt diet do not.

These studies are in line with all the other research that concludes that [low salt diets greatly increase the risk of death for congestive heart failure patients](#). Other peer-reviewed studies demonstrate clear evidence of [cognitive impairment, adverse infant neurodevelopment, increased attention deficits](#) and [increased incidence of falls in the elderly](#) – all the result of reduced salt intakes.

The continual flow of scientific evidence completely contradicts the idea of population-wide salt reduction. Because the human metabolic process follows the laws of science, I expect more and more evidence will contradict all the misinformation and propaganda spread by bureaucrats who are so behind the science, they have no idea which way is up. It's really time that they understand that human physiology answers to a much higher authority than them.

It's also time they drop chasing fantasies and start focusing on the hard evidence that will result in solutions. Consumers deserve nothing less.

This is the Salt Guru saying goodbye for now. ◀

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