

# Salt, heart disease link disputed in major study

THE WASHINGTON POST

A major new scientific analysis is raising questions about the link between salt consumption and heart disease.

Rod Taylor of the University of Exeter in Britain and his colleagues conducted a systematic review of the scientific literature for the Cochrane Collaboration, an independent international organization of researchers that analyzes the evidence for

medical questions.

In an article published in the American Journal of Hypertension, the researchers identified seven studies involving about 6,257 adults with normal or high blood pressure who reduced the amount of salt in their diets. When they pooled the data to conduct a "meta-analysis" of the studies, the researchers found no clear evidence that cutting salt cut the

chances of dying from heart disease or dying for any other reason, the researchers reported.

The Salt Institute issued a statement on Wednesday citing the new analysis as the latest evidence that government efforts to reduce salt intake were "ill-advised and possibly hazardous to the public's health."

While there was evidence

that reducing sodium did produce a small decrease in blood pressure, there was insufficient evidence to determine whether that decrease had any effect one way or the other on the chances of dying, the researchers said.

Because of concerns about the potential dangers of salt intake, many governments have been taking steps to try to reduce the amount of sodium

in the diet, the researchers noted. In the United States, the Food and Drug Administration, for example, has been developing plans to try to slowly reduce the amount of salt consumed by Americans every day because of concerns about heart disease.

But, based on the findings, a version of which was also published online by the Cochrane Library, the researchers called

## Trying to limit intake may be counterproductive, researchers say

for additional studies to try to clarify the relationship between sodium intake and heart disease.

"With governments setting ever lower targets for salt intake, and food manufacturers working to remove it from their products, it's really important that we do some large research trials to get a full understanding of the benefits and risks of reducing salt intake," Taylor said in a statement released with the analysis.

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*We have Sea Salt with Trace Minerals Available  
At Winwell Wellness Center, 412-922-9355.*