

Got Salt?

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Last week I wrote about the very important need for water and its recommended daily intake for one's well-being. Our body fluid, however, very much resembles the ocean in its consistency. Salt plays a vital role in the delicate balance of water handling as well as other bodily chores.

For example, the sodium in salt (sodium chloride) is necessary to move water into and out of the cells appropriately, assisting in removal of toxins and waste at a cellular level. It is also necessary for proper adrenal function, helping with energy production. The chloride is needed in part to make up the hydrochloric acid of the stomach which is necessary for proper digestion.

This only begins the list of important body functions that are salt dependent. The importance of salt in sustaining life has been known for centuries. Wars have been fought over salt, trade routes established due to its demand and its value revered as currency. Even animals go out of their way to find it.

Salt as it naturally occurs in nature is rich in over 80 trace minerals that are much needed by the body. Table salts such as Morton's have been stripped of these minerals as well as having anti-caking agents (aluminum silicate) and sugar (dextrose) added. These added ingredients are in service to the salt pouring better, or "raining as it pours". Once again, though, man cannot outdo or fool Mother Nature. It is the refined and denatured salts both in our shakers and added to our processed foods that are creating the health havoc, not the salt that nature provides for our use.

Natural salt is not white and it is not dry. It is a little gray with minerals and feels damp or clumps in humidity. It has been dried in the sun and not heated to high temperatures. It does not pour nicely, but feels earthy and has a more pleasing taste. Celtic Sea Salt is one excellent choice and can be ordered on-line at www.celtic-seasalt.com. Redmond's Real Salt, now available in many stores, is a great starter replacement for Morton's.

Dosages up to ¼ tsp of sea salt per quart of water that you drink per day are the recommendation of some of the top nutritional researchers and sports physicians. This may be accomplished by a return to salting your foods and/or sprinkling a little sea salt into your water as you drink it. I often recommend to my clients to add a pinch of salt to their workout water bottle. They report feeling better hydrated and notice an improved performance as a result.

Additional outcomes my clients have experienced in balancing their water intake with sea salt are: 1) A stop of the nighttime trips to the bathroom as well as the sensation throughout the day that the water they drink just runs through them.

Their bodies are now holding onto and using the water properly. 2) Elimination of muscle cramps 3) Increase of energy 4) Normalizing of Blood Pressure.

A few words to those concerned about Iodine and believing the need for an iodized salt. Sea Salt contains Iodine in its trace mineral content. In this way the body is getting it in its natural organic form. The Iodine added to iodized salts is in an inorganic form which is more difficult for the body to use. This inorganic form in its overuse is also being linked to the rise in hyperthyroidism.

So, if you have fallen for the salt scare, I invite you back into some nutritional wisdom. Get rid of the Morton's, get rid of the highly salted processed foods, get yourself a quality sea salt and enjoy the