

# Young men consuming an alarming amount of salt

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Young Swedish men are consuming at least double the recommended amount of salt according to a study carried out by the Sahlgrenska Academy at the University of Gothenburg and Sahlgrenska University Hospital.

"It's alarming that young Swedish men are consuming so much salt, and something needs to be done about it. We can really only speculate on the consequences of such a high salt intake later on in life, in the form of cardiovascular diseases and [stroke](#)," says Lena Hulthén, Professor in Clinical Nutrition at the Sahlgrenska Academy.

The study included almost a hundred men in their twenties. Urine samples from all participants were analysed over a 24-hour period. The participants also answered questions about their eating habits. The urine samples showed that the young men were consuming at least two times the World Health Organisation's recommended daily intake of six grams.

"High salt intake can lead to high blood pressure, but we couldn't detect any connection in our study. High blood pressure doesn't usually develop until a person is in their 30s or 40s, since the kidneys' ability to deal with the excess salt deteriorates with age," says Lena Hulthén.

Salt in food is found largely in ready meals such as pizza and frozen meat hash, but it is also in bread, cheese, meat sandwich fillings, fish products, breakfast cereals and other products produced by the food industry. An earlier Danish study has shown that only a tenth of the salt

that we consume comes from our own salt cellars.

"The food industry needs clear regulations on how much salt it is allowed to use if we want to reduce total [salt intake](#). One solution could be to follow Finland's example, where all food packaging has to clearly state the salt content to make it easier for the consumer to select products containing less [salt](#)," says Lena Hulthén.

**More information:** People who consume a lot of salt run a greater risk of developing high blood pressure, which in turn is one of the key causes of heart problems and stroke. The National Food Administration (Livsmedelsverket) recommends that Swedish women consume no more than six grams of salt a day, and Swedish men no more than seven grams, but the authority would ideally like to see us consuming between five and six grams a day. The National Food Administration would also like to see children consuming less salt.

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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