

High salt diets damaging Australian men's sex lives

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While the adverse affects of high blood pressure on men's sex lives is clear, the direct link between salt and sex is yet to be proven. There is, however, a huge body of evidence showing that salt is the main cause of high blood pressure which kills thousands of Australian men each year - mostly through premature strokes, heart attacks and heart failure.

Excess salt is also implicated in a range of other serious illnesses, including [stomach cancer](#), [kidney disease](#), osteoporosis and asthma.

The University's Professor Bruce Neal, Senior Director at The George Institute and Chairman of the Australian Division of World Action on Salt and Health (AWASH) opened the event by presenting the findings of new research on salt levels in foods commonly eaten by Australian men.

New salt targets for the [food industry](#) were also launched. "While we won't present definitive new evidence linking salt and sex, we are serious about getting the salt message across to men," said Professor Neal. "Men die younger and need to drastically reduce the amount of salt they eat. But the food industry needs to play its part too."

He added: "Our latest work reveals the shockingly high levels of salt that are hidden in the processed foods and meals that men are eating every day. Whilst many companies have been reducing salt levels in foods, and the government's Food and Health Dialogue has set salt targets for bread and breakfast cereals, a greater effort is needed to ensure salt intakes in

Australia can be reduced much more quickly.

"That's why we have today announced 85 new salt targets for foods. This will give industry the direction they have been asking for. We will be working closely with companies to help them reduce salt in line with these interim targets in support of ongoing Food and Health Dialogue discussions."

Around 100 delegates attended the debate, chaired by Dr Stan Goldstein, Chief Medical Advisor of the medical research foundation Bupa Australia. Panel members included Andrew Giles from the Garvan Research Foundation, Daniel Williams from Men's Health Magazine, Sue Radd from the Nutrition and Wellbeing Clinic and Jodie McHenry from the Dietitians Association of Australia.

Said Dr. Goldstein: "Bupa Australia communicates crucial health information to the public and to its members every day. Young men (and women) are eating too much salt, developing habits that can unknowingly hit them hard over time - there is clear evidence that this is resulting in premature death and disease. Getting the message across, especially to men, that they need to reduce their salt intake should be a priority for government and health organisations."

World Salt Awareness Week runs from 21 to 27 March this year and the theme is Salt and Men's Health. Other events being organised by AWASH as part of the week include a low salt cooking class and the launch of a new project to assess [salt](#) intake in Lithgow, New South Wales. A range of informative materials are also available.

Provided by University of Sydney

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