An excess of salty food seasons the body with stress
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To study this, experts from the University of Edinburgh used mice, who ordinarily have a low-salt diet, and gave them high-salt food to reflect the typical intake of humans.

They found that not only did resting stress hormone levels increase, but the mice's hormone response to environmental stress was double that of mice that had a normal diet.

Salt intake increased the activity of genes that produce the proteins in the brain which control how the body responds to stress.

Experts say further studies are already underway to understand if a high-salt intake leads to other behavioral changes such as anxiety and aggression.

The study is published in *Cardiovascular Research*.

"We are what we eat and understanding how high-salt food changes our mental health is an important step to improving well-being. We know that eating too much salt damages our heart, blood vessels and kidneys. This study now tells us that high salt in our food also changes the way our brain handles stress," says Renal Physiology Professor Matthew Bailey at the University of Edinburgh's Center for Cardiovascular Science.


Provided by University of Edinburgh