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AMA's campaign against salt fails to recognize health benefits of sea salt and trace minerals

You may have heard the [recent news](#) that the AMA has publicly come out against excessive sodium consumption and salt in particular. Suddenly, the alternative health community is engaged in a whirlwind of debate on the topic. But wait, if salt is a major risk factor in heart and renal diseases, why is anyone upset?

Quite simply, the issue is that not all sources of sodium and salt are the same. As far as the body is concerned, there is no connection between the chemically-cleansed [sodium](#) chloride table salt you buy in the supermarket, which is added to virtually every processed food you buy, and the mineral rich organic [sea salt](#) available in health food stores. One can kill you; the other heals you. In fact, it's essential for life.

One point everyone can agree on is that the body needs sodium to function. It is the main component of the body's extra-cellular fluids, and it helps carry nutrients into the cells. Sodium also helps regulate other body functions, such as [blood pressure](#) and fluid volume, and works on the lining of blood vessels to keep the pressure balance normal.

Everyone can also agree that just like anything else, [salt](#) or sodium should not be consumed in excess. (But then again, that's true of [water](#) and oxygen as well.) Which brings us back to why [the AMA](#) came out with a warning: Americans are consuming ever higher amounts of sodium, up to 6,000 milligrams a day, instead of the recommended 500 to 2,000 milligrams per day. These high amounts, in a form that is unfriendly to the [human body](#) and with no ancillary mineral benefits, are what lead to serious health problems. However, this is not necessarily the heart of the debate. The issue is that the AMA is against all forms of salt, which could threaten to obscure salt's importance and to confuse thoughtful consumers.

To further explain, standard table salt is highly refined, chemically cleansed, and unfriendly to the human body. Unrefined sea salt, on the other hand, is a naturally occurring complex of sodium chloride, which includes major [minerals](#) such as calcium and magnesium and a complete complement of essential [trace minerals](#). This is the form of salt the body is designed to utilize – having been the salt of choice since humans first walked the earth. Refined table salt, on the other hand, is a modern invention, artificially designed to look white and pour easily. The human body doesn't like it.

This is very similar to the vitamin dilemma. **The best vitamin supplements are full complexes that can be absorbed into the body because they mimic how they are found in nature.** Vitamin E, for instance, is usually sold as d-alpha-tocopherol (dl-alpha if you buy synthetic), but [vitamin E](#) naturally exists as a complex of at least eight components – 4 tocopherols and 4 tocotrienols, of which d-alpha is at best the sixth most potent (source: [VitaminRetailer.com](#)).

Likewise, the [vitamin C](#) found in a lemon does not exist as ascorbic acid, but as a complex that includes bioflavonoids and [calcium](#). You will notice that now most vitamin C supplements contain added bioflavonoids and calcium because over time supplement manufacturers have learned that the body doesn't utilize pure ascorbic acid without the rest of the vitamin C complex present. But nature had it right from the very beginning. Lemons contain the full complex; oranges contain the full complex; and grapefruit contain the full complex. Similar to complex vitamins, unrefined natural sea salt is also a complex, one that contains the full spectrum of trace minerals that are essential for life but lacking in our modern diet.

Here we get to the heart of the debate: trace minerals.

The issue of getting enough trace minerals in our diet should not be taken lightly. Traditionally, eating fresh grains, fruits, and [vegetables](#) grown in nutrient-rich soil, drinking mineral rich water, and including naturally occurring forms of raw salt in the diet have provided the full spectrum of ionically-charged trace minerals necessary for life. Unfortunately, naturally occurring, nutrient-rich soil is almost non-existent on commercial farms and bottled water is mostly devoid of trace minerals. Key trace minerals now missing from the modern diet include copper, tin, silver, gold, and lithium. The entire burden has shifted to naturally occurring salt and/or trace mineral supplements. Recently, trace minerals in the news include selenium for preventing cancer, boron for preventing osteoporosis, and chromium for regulating blood sugar levels. Of course, finding the right source of trace minerals is tricky, but that is another topic.

In the end, as the scientific community debates on whether sodium chloride causes high blood pressure or if sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) is a better alternative, others will remind consumers that going back to nature is the key. Although we can't rely on our [fruits](#) and vegetables any more for minerals, we still have a natural alternative: unrefined sea salt. Of course, at least everyone can all agree on one thing: a healthy diet is a diet in moderation.

In a world of specialists, [Jon Barron](#) is the true Health Renaissance Man. He has wrapped his mind around virtually every natural therapy known to man and brought it together in a whole body package -- delivering a whole body "system" program, a line of [nutraceutical products](#), and cutting-edge functional foods and drinks for consumers to enjoy. Combining his knowledge and research with modern science, he continues to pioneer solutions in the [alternative health](#) industry for the overall benefit of mankind.

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