Dispatch: Keep Your Junk Science Off My Salt

By ACSH Staff — June 17, 2010

It’s the 12th annual Junk Science Week in Canada, and the Financial Post [1] is calling for science, not politics, to determine the merit behind salt reduction policies [2]. Dr. David McCarron, visiting professor at the University of California, Davis and executive director of Shaping America’s Youth, writes that human physiology already dictates our salt intake:

Salt intake is regulated within a relatively narrow range by highly sophisticated internal circuits. These communications between the brain and multiple critical organs cannot be modified by public health policies; they respond only to our bodies’ internal signals such that actual salt consumption varies little regardless of the sodium content of the food supply. ACSH’s Dr. Elizabeth Whelan agrees. “Salt plays an important role in our physiology, and to systematically curtail salt to such a large extent could have far-reaching consequences. If you take out too much salt, one could rationally posit that people could end up eating more food to achieve satiety.”

Dr. Ross adds, "Further, only a minority of people are salt-sensitive and will have a reduction in blood pressure with a reduced sodium intake. Others, however, may actually suffer a decline in cardiac function."

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