

## Nutrition article

# SALT LINKED TO STROKE



**A new review which looked at the diet and health of over 170,000 people has backed up previous claims about the negative effects to health of excessive salt intake.**

The link between higher salt intake and high blood pressure has been known for some time, but the findings of the new review have shown that elevated levels of salt in the diet translate to a markedly increased chance of the development of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

Thirteen existing studies that assessed the relationship between salt and cardiovascular disease and stroke were analysed. It was discovered that a relatively small difference in the daily

intake of salt (a difference of 5grams) equates to a 23% difference in the incidence of stroke and a 17% difference in cardiovascular disease. However, although 5grams may appear to be a small amount, when comparing the quantities of salt consumed in different parts of the world to the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended daily amount, it is clear that 5grams is actually quite a large difference. The WHO recommends a total daily intake of 5grams of salt, whereas the average amount consumed by Westerners is 10grams.

The research team made the estimation that an international reduction of salt intake, to the advocated 5grams per day, could lead to the prevention of a million stroke deaths and three million cardiovascular disease deaths annually.

*Source: British Medical Journal online*