



ELITE

Personal Training and Fitness Solutions

# HEALTH TOPIC OF THE WEEK

## 7/17 - Himalayan Salt: Help or Hoax?

### Introduction

The artisan salt market is big business. Pink Himalayan salt is everywhere these days. But is the hype based on hard facts? Claims surrounding the benefits of Himalayan rock salt include the ability to strengthen bones, regulate fluid levels in the body, improve circulation and balance pH in the body. For these reasons, this pink salt is becoming popular as a replacement for traditional table salt despite costing up to 20 times more! To date, there is little scientific evidence that it is superior to table salt.



### What is Pink Himalayan Salt?

Pink Himalayan salt is a pink-colored rock salt typically mined from the Punjab region in Pakistan. This coarse salt has a unique color because it is not pure sodium chloride like iodized table salt. It also contains dozens of trace minerals, which accounts for the pink color.

### Purported Benefits

While increasing mineral intake is important, minerals make up only 2-6% of most Himalayan salt. Based on the small amount that is typically added to a meal, significant intake of these trace minerals is unlikely. In other words, their bioavailability is limited, as shown in a study published in the Journal of Trace Elements in Medicine and Biology.



The belief that pink Himalayan rock salt is better for your health because it contains less sodium chloride is questionable since many varieties will be 98% identical to traditional table salt.



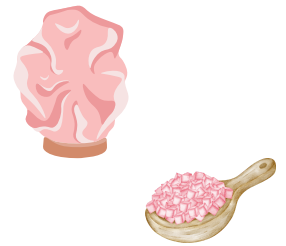
In terms of flavor, some people do prefer the taste of Himalayan salt, and for people who may be suffering from certain mineral deficiencies, boosting trace mineral intake even a small amount could possibly aid in certain areas.



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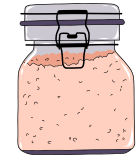
Himalayan salt is considered a “natural” form of salt because it is hand-mined. It does not undergo processing, nor is it exposed to anti-caking agents or other chemicals that table salt may be treated with. Though there is no proven danger to the processing of table salt, those who prefer to live a purely organic lifestyle may be drawn to this rock salt variety.

Claims of health benefits linked to other Himalayan rock salt products—lamps, cutting boards, bath salts, etc., lack any peer-reviewed evidence. These products should be appreciated for their aesthetic or sensory value, not their health effects.



### Risks and Considerations

Most table salt is iodized. It provides adequate levels of additional iodine for our diet. US regulations require iodized salt to have a concentration of 45 mg I/kg. For people who are struggling with their thyroid or have an iodine deficiency, it may be better to stick with iodized table salt than pink Himalayan salt, which may contain iodine but in a lower concentration.



Salt intake should be closely regulated. High levels of salt can increase your risk of high blood pressure, kidney disease, heart disease, stroke, osteoporosis and liver damage. Moderation of any salt variety is key. If you're going to buy Himalayan salt, get it from verified or trusted sources. Some products are falsely marketed as authentic pink Himalayan rock salt but may include high levels of heavy metals, such as lead, or may be artificially colored.



### Summary

Research has not shown that Himalayan salt has any unique health benefits compared to other dietary salts. The mineral impurities that give it a pink color, often promoted as healthful, are far too low in concentration to provide significant nutrition. You would have to eat an almost lethal amount of sodium to achieve helpful quantities of the other minerals.

Looking to season your food without so much salt? Don't reach for the pink stuff. Let EPT advise on some healthy herbs and spices to use instead.



### Reference Articles

- [www.webmd.com/diet/himalayan-salt-good-for-you](http://www.webmd.com/diet/himalayan-salt-good-for-you)
- Pink Himalayan salt: Does it have any health benefits? ([medicalnewstoday.com](http://medicalnewstoday.com))
- Microsoft Word - Himalayan sea salt \*FINAL PDF.docx ([mayoclinic.org](http://mayoclinic.org))
- Pink salts are NOT healthier for you - Catherine Saxelby's Foodwatch
- Himalayan Salt vs Sea Salt | Organic Facts
- Pink Himalayan Salt Is More Expensive but No Healthier Than Table Salt ([businessinsider.com](http://businessinsider.com))



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