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Many health foods saltier than Big Macs

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1st August, 2007

THE ARTICLE

Many health foods saltier than Big Macs

The salads and healthy pastas we buy to eat well may not be as good for us as we think. Campaigners say a lot of supposedly healthy food should carry a health warning because of the high salt content. The British pressure group Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) reported recently that many take-away salads and other foods aimed at the health conscious actually contain more salt than a Big Mac and fries. This means many British people are unknowingly overdosing on salt on a regular, if not daily, basis. This report comes hot on the heels of an earlier CASH finding that many pre-packaged sandwiches are up to seven times saltier than a bag of potato chips. The danger is that high salt consumption causes high blood pressure, strokes and heart attacks.

CASH looked at 156 readymade salads and pasta dishes from Britain's leading food retailers and fast-food outlets. The researchers discovered that compared with a Big Mac and small fries, which has 2.7 grams of salt, a noodle salad from a chain called EAT contained 4.4 grams per portion. This is almost three-quarters of the 6-gram recommended daily salt limit for an adult. Twenty per cent of the meals contained more salt than is ideal. Professor Graham MacGregor of CASH said: "Many people think of a salad as a healthy lunch [and] in many cases this is true." He added: "We would encourage people to look out for low-salt, low-fat salads as a good lunchtime option." However, he warned: "There are some salads out there which really ought to carry a health warning, rather than be thought of as a healthy option."

WARM-UPS

1. SALT: Walk around the class and talk to other students about salt. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

salads / pasta / health food / Big Macs / sandwiches / high blood pressure / restaurants / fast food / lunch / low-fat food / health warnings

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. FAST FOOD: In pairs / groups, talk about your thoughts on these fast foods. Can you remember the first time you had them?

- sandwiches
- burgers
- noodles
- fish and chips
- fries
- pizza
- fried chicken
- other _____

4. UNFINISHED SENTENCES: With your partner(s), agree on an ending to these sentence beginnings. They are from the article. Change partners and share and talk about what you wrote.

- Salads and healthy pastas _____
- Food should carry a health warning because _____
- Pre-packaged sandwiches are _____
- Britain's leading food retailers _____
- Compared with a Big Mac and small fries _____
- Many people think of a salad as _____

5. SALT: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'salt'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think fast food is a good thing about society. Students B think the opposite. Change partners often. Share your findings.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. Some salads in shops are not as healthy as we are led to believe. T / F
- b. Britain's government will put a health warning on all health food. T / F
- c. A report said Big Macs and fries are incredibly low in salt. T / F
- d. Pre-packaged sandwiches are seven times saltier than potato chips. T / F
- e. A consumer group analyzed the salt content in stores worldwide. T / F
- f. We should consume four and a half grams of salt per day. T / F
- g. The survey found 20% of health food in stores was too salty. T / F
- h. A professor encouraged people to look for low-salt salads. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| 1. campaigners | a. O'Ding |
| 2. carry | b. agreement |
| 3. consensus | c. choice |
| 4. overdosing | d. stores |
| 5. consumption | e. advocates |
| 6. leading | f. should |
| 7. outlets | g. display |
| 8. limit | h. top |
| 9. ought to | i. intake |
| 10. option | j. ceiling |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. may not be as good for | a. recommended daily salt limit |
| 2. healthy food should carry | b. the health conscious |
| 3. other foods aimed at | c. heels of an earlier CASH finding |
| 4. British people are unknowingly | d. ought to carry a health warning |
| 5. This report comes hot on the | e. called EAT |
| 6. Britain's leading food retailers and | f. us as we think |
| 7. a noodle salad from a chain | g. for low-salt, low-fat salads |
| 8. three-quarters of the 6-gram | h. a health warning |
| 9. encourage people to look out | i. overdosing on salt |
| 10. some salads out there which really | j. fast-food outlets |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Many health foods saltier than Big Macs

The salads and healthy pastas we buy to eat _____ may not be as good for us as we think. Campaigners say a lot of _____ healthy food should carry a health warning because of the high salt _____. The British pressure group Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) reported recently that many take-away salads and other foods _____ at the health conscious actually contain more salt than a Big Mac and fries. This means many British people are unknowingly overdosing on salt on a _____, if not daily, basis. This report comes hot on the _____ of an earlier CASH finding that many pre-packaged sandwiches are up to seven times _____ than a bag of potato chips. The danger is that high salt consumption causes high blood pressure, _____ and heart attacks.

CASH looked at 156 readymade salads and pasta _____ from Britain's leading food retailers and fast-food _____. The researchers discovered that compared with a Big Mac and small fries, which has 2.7 grams of salt, a noodle salad from a _____ called EAT contained 4.4 grams per portion. This is almost three-quarters of the 6-gram recommended daily salt _____ for an adult. Twenty per cent of the meals contained more salt than is _____. Professor Graham MacGregor of CASH said: "Many people think of a salad as a healthy lunch [and] in many cases this is true." He added: "We would _____ people to look out for low-salt, low-fat salads as a good lunchtime option." However, he _____: "There are some salads out there which really _____ to carry a health warning, rather than be thought of as a healthy option."

regular
content
aimed
strokes
well
heels
supposedly
saltier
ought
limit
outlets
ideal
dishes
warned
chain
encourage

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Many health foods saltier than Big Macs

The salads and healthy pastas we buy to eat well _____ us as we think. Campaigners say a _____ healthy food should carry a health warning because of the high salt content. The British pressure group Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) reported recently that many take-away salads _____ the health conscious actually contain more salt than a Big Mac and fries. This means many British people _____ salt on a regular, if not daily, basis. This report comes _____ an earlier CASH finding that many pre-packaged sandwiches are _____ than a bag of potato chips. The danger is that high salt consumption causes high blood pressure, strokes and heart attacks.

CASH looked at 156 readymade salads and pasta dishes from Britain's _____ fast-food outlets. The researchers discovered that compared with a Big Mac and small fries, _____ salt, a noodle salad from a chain called EAT contained 4.4 grams per portion. This is _____ the 6-gram recommended daily salt limit for an adult. Twenty per cent of the meals contained _____. Professor Graham MacGregor of CASH said: "Many people think of a salad as a healthy lunch [and] in many cases this is true." He added: "We would encourage people _____, low-fat salads as a good lunchtime option." However, he warned: "There are some salads out there which _____ health warning, rather than be thought of as a healthy option."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'health' and 'food'.

health	food
---------------	-------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• may• carry• aimed• basis• heels• danger	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• outlets• compared• limit• ideal• encourage• ought to
--	---

STUDENT SALT SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about SALT in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2	STUDENT 3
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) Do you like salt?
- c) Are you careful with the amount of salt you consume?
- d) Do you always look for the salt content in the food you buy?
- e) How do you think some salads contain more salt than a Big Mac?
- f) Do you ever worry about the harm the food you eat might do to you?
- g) What food do you overdose on?
- h) What do you think of the finding that pre-packaged sandwiches can be seven times saltier than potato chips?
- i) Do you think the tastiest things are always the things that are bad for us?
- j) What more would you like to know about this report?



STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What readymade healthy foods are popular in your country?
- c) Do people in your country generally eat well?
- d) What do you think of fast food?
- e) Do you think it's important to calculate how much of the recommended daily portion of salt you consume?
- f) What do you think of salad for lunch?
- g) Do you think food should carry more labeling about nutrition?
- h) What would life be like without salt in food?
- i) What questions would you like to ask professor MacGregor?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a) What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b) Was there a question you didn't like?
- c) Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d) What did you like talking about?
- e) Which was the most difficult question?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

Many health foods saltier than Big Macs

The salads and healthy pastas we buy to eat (1) _____ may not be as good for us as we think. Campaigners say a lot of (2) _____ healthy food should carry a health warning because of the high salt (3) _____. The British pressure group Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) reported recently that many take-away salads and other foods aimed (4) _____ the health conscious actually contain more salt than a Big Mac and fries. This means many British people are unknowingly overdosing (5) _____ salt on a regular, if not daily, basis. This report comes hot on the heels of an earlier CASH finding that many pre-packaged sandwiches are (6) _____ to seven times saltier than a bag of potato chips. The danger is that high salt consumption causes high blood pressure, strokes and heart attacks.

CASH looked at 156 readymade salads and pasta dishes from Britain's (7) _____ food retailers and fast-food outlets. The researchers discovered that compared (8) _____ a Big Mac and small fries, which has 2.7 grams of salt, a noodle salad from a chain called EAT contained 4.4 grams per portion. This is almost three-quarters of the 6-gram recommended (9) _____ salt limit for an adult. Twenty per cent of the meals contained more salt than is (10) _____. Professor Graham MacGregor of CASH said: "Many people think of a salad as a healthy lunch [and] in many cases this is true." He added: "We would encourage people to look (11) _____ for low-salt, low-fat salads as a good lunchtime option." However, he warned: "There are some salads out there which really (12) _____ to carry a health warning, rather than be thought of as a healthy option."

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) well | (b) good | (c) healthy | (d) health |
| 2. | (a) supposes | (b) suppose | (c) supposedly | (d) supposition |
| 3. | (a) index | (b) content | (c) indices | (d) contents |
| 4. | (a) with | (b) for | (c) by | (d) at |
| 5. | (a) over | (b) in | (c) on | (d) by |
| 6. | (a) up | (b) down | (c) in | (d) out |
| 7. | (a) leads | (b) leader | (c) lead | (d) leading |
| 8. | (a) by | (b) with | (c) from | (d) in |
| 9. | (a) daytime | (b) days | (c) daily | (d) day |
| 10. | (a) ideal | (b) idea | (c) ideals | (d) ideas |
| 11. | (a) in | (b) out | (c) up | (d) down |
| 12. | (a) want | (b) used | (c) should | (d) ought |

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about the dangers of having too much salt. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. HEALTH FOOD POSTER: Make a poster about the different types of health food around the world. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about health food and fast food. Include imaginary interviews with consumers and company executives.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the boss of a food company. Ask him/her three questions about healthy food. Give him/her three suggestions about how to make food healthier to eat. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. T b. F c. F d. T e. F f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. campaigners | a. advocates |
| 2. carry | b. display |
| 3. consensus | c. agreement |
| 4. overdosing | d. ODing |
| 5. consumption | e. intake |
| 6. leading | f. top |
| 7. outlets | g. stores |
| 8. limit | h. ceiling |
| 9. ought to | i. should |
| 10. option | j. choice |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. may not be as good for | a. us as we think |
| 2. healthy food should carry | b. a health warning |
| 3. other foods aimed at | c. the health conscious |
| 4. British people are unknowingly | d. overdosing on salt |
| 5. This report comes hot on the | e. heels of an earlier CASH finding |
| 6. Britain's leading food retailers and | f. fast-food outlets |
| 7. a noodle salad from a chain | g. called EAT |
| 8. three-quarters of the 6-gram | h. recommended daily salt limit |
| 9. encourage people to look out | i. for low-salt, low-fat salads |
| 10. some salads out there which really | j. ought to carry a health warning |

GAP FILL:

Many health foods saltier than Big Macs

The salads and healthy pastas we buy to eat **well** may not be as good for us as we think. Campaigners say a lot of **supposedly** healthy food should carry a health warning because of the high salt **content**. The British pressure group Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) reported recently that many take-away salads and other foods **aimed** at the health conscious actually contain more salt than a Big Mac and fries. This means many British people are unknowingly overdosing on salt on a **regular**, if not daily, basis. This report comes hot on the **heels** of an earlier CASH finding that many pre-packaged sandwiches are up to seven times **saltier** than a bag of potato chips. The danger is that high salt consumption causes high blood pressure, **strokes** and heart attacks.

CASH looked at 156 readymade salads and pasta **dishes** from Britain's leading food retailers and fast-food **outlets**. The researchers discovered that compared with a Big Mac and small fries, which has 2.7 grams of salt, a noodle salad from a **chain** called EAT contained 4.4 grams per portion. This is almost three-quarters of the 6-gram recommended daily salt **limit** for an adult. Twenty per cent of the meals contained more salt than is **ideal**. Professor Graham MacGregor of CASH said: "Many people think of a salad as a healthy lunch [and] in many cases this is true." He added: "We would **encourage** people to look out for low-salt, low-fat salads as a good lunchtime option." However, he **warned**: "There are some salads out there which really **ought** to carry a health warning, rather than be thought of as a healthy option."

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - a 2 - c 3 - b 4 - d 5 - c 6 - a 7 - d 8 - b 9 - c 10 - a 11 - b 12 - d