

APRIL 2010

# Kindred *Spirits*

## All salt can raise your blood pressure Sea Salt or Table Salt?

### Don't Rely on Hand Sanitizers

Hand sanitizers, especially alcohol-based gel sanitizers have become popular with the HINI flu outbreak. In many cases, people are using hand sanitizers as a replacement for hand washing. For consumers, the use of hand sanitizers is not needed and they are expensive.

**Proper hand washing is sufficient.**

Hand sanitizers should only be used in situations where hand washing with soap and water are not available. In those situations, use of an alcohol gel is certainly better than nothing at all.

Published in partnership with the Family Friends Program, Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics.

MU Extension contributors: Dr. Nina Chen, Saralee Bury Jamieson, Kris Jenkins, Lynda Johnson, Glenda Kinder, Susan Mills-Gray, Diana Milne and Lisa Wallace.

"Sea salt is very popular right now, but consumers need to know that both contain sodium and that means both can raise blood pressure," said Susan Mills-Gray, MU Extension nutrition and health specialist.

**Sea Salt:** Sea salt is harvested from seawater through evaporation. It is available in fine or coarse grain and has a slightly different taste than table salt because of the different minerals it contains. Most sea salts don't contain iodine or any other additives. However, sea salt does have impurities like the tiny bits of clay that give gray sea salt its color or the iron-rich red volcanic clay added to Hawaiian sea salt.

**Table Salt:** Table salt is typically from rock salt, which is mined from mineral deposits. It is a fine-grained salt that often contains added iodine, which is necessary for normal thyroid function. Most table salts also contain an anti-caking ingredient to keep them from sticking.

Both rock salt and sea salt contain sodium chloride, and

other minerals like calcium, potassium and magnesium sulfates. Rock salt deposits are often a more pure mass of sodium than what you get by drying out sea salt. Since rock salt for human consumption is typically processed to remove grit and other impurities, by the time it reaches the table, it is almost pure sodium. The additional minerals and impurities in sea salt dilute the sodium levels slightly.

According to Mills-Gray, "Although your body needs some sodium to function properly, most people eat too much, which can lead to high blood pressure." No matter what kind of salt you use, most experts recommend limiting sodium between 1,500 and 2,300 milligrams daily. Based on much research, experts also believe that 1,200 milligrams or less a day is best for lowering high blood pressure. One teaspoon of table salt contains about 2,400 milligrams of sodium, while one teaspoon of sea salt has about 2,250 milligrams.

# Life is Full of Changes

## Learn to understand and deal with change

Life is full of changes...some of these changes are predictable transitions, such as a baby learning to walk, sending a child off to his first day of school or being able to vote when we're 18. Other changes may not be so predictable, nor are they something we are equipped to handle right away: losing a job and struggling to pay the bills; getting married or divorced; pregnancy/childbirth/parenting. According to Diana Milne, MU Extension human development specialist, "These life events are common, yet many

people are ill-prepared to handle these changes."

When life events impact our relationships, it's not unusual to feel over-whelmed and stressed-out. Usually, when a grandparent or relative steps in and fills the parenting role, it is because of a loss of some kind. The children may be with you due to the death of their parent, or serious situations such as drug/alcohol addiction, mental illness, domestic violence/child abuse or incarceration.

People respond to life changes in different ways. We tend to feel more in control when a change is something we want. When change is thrust upon us, it often means

we have to take on some new challenges. Here are some ideas that may help you look at transitions in your life as opportunities for positive change:

- **Take care of yourself.** Eat healthy, exercise, and get enough sleep.
- **Learn from experience.** What is really important to you and your family?
- **Find the humor.** No matter what you're going through, you can always find a reason to smile or laugh.
- **Talk with others.** Build a network of friends, family and community resources.

*Source: Work and Family Life Newsletter, January 2010, Vol. 24, No.1.*

### University of Missouri Extension

#### Bates County

1 N. Delaware, Butler, MO 64730  
660.679.4167

#### Cass County

302 S. Main St., Harrisonville, MO 64701  
816.380.8460

#### Clay County

1901 NE 48th St., Kansas City, MO 64118  
816.407.3490

#### Henry County

100 W. Franklin, Rm 16, Clinton, MO 64735  
660.885.5556

#### Jackson County

1106 W. Main St.  
Blue Springs, MO 64015  
816.252.5051

2700 E. 18th St., Suite 240  
Kansas City, MO 64127  
816.482.5850

#### Lafayette County

14 E. 19th St., Suite 102  
Higginsville, MO 64037  
660.584.3658

#### St. Clair County

655 2nd St., Osceola, MO 64776  
417.646.2419

[extension.missouri.edu](http://extension.missouri.edu)

equal opportunity/ADA institution

## Now You're Cooking!

Combining cooking time with family time is a great way to spend time with your children and to juggle the responsibility of preparing the family meal. According to Saralee Jaimeson, MU Extension human development specialist, "When children are involved in helping to buy and cook food, they usually enjoy the food more."

Assign kitchen tasks appropriate for your child's age and that can be done successfully. There are many jobs that a young child can do in the kitchen with adult supervision. Give clear instructions, demonstrate the task, and let your child practice.

- **Set the table**
- **Tear lettuce**
- **Break eggs in a bowl**
- **Measure ingredients**
- **Spread soft spreads**

Let your children know that you enjoy working with them and appreciate their efforts.