

But Don't I Need Iodized Salt?

Iodine is an important nutrient to the human body. It is naturally present in sea water, sea vegetables, and sea salt. It is important for energy production, mental development, production of thyroid hormones and for a strong lymph system. Although small amounts of iodine are found in the blood, nerves, and other organs, most of the body's iodine is present in the thyroid, ovaries and uterus. Women require more than men especially during puberty, pregnancy and menopause or when there is infection or stress. Iodine is involved in the metabolism of calcium and phosphorus. It is also important in the absorption of complex carbohydrates. Iodine helps the digestion of carbohydrates which in turn will help with weight problems and sugar cravings.

Because iodine is not available to inland populations and deficiency of iodine produces goiter and other thyroid disorders, iodine is added to processed salt. Sea salt naturally contains iodine but once it has been washed and/or refined (such as typical table salt or most 'sea salt') it doesn't contain a speck of iodine. Iodine is therefore added to refined salt. This is an instance of a product that once contained a multitude of healthful elements which are lost in processing has a few added back and it is ironically called "enriched."

There is evidence that the inorganic form of iodine added to refined salt does not decrease the incidence of goiter. The iodine, added in this artificial and excessive way (an average of 30-1200 times the dosage that occurs in natural salt), passes in the urine within 20 minutes and all of it will have left the body within 24 hours. In this excessive concentration, iodine can cause hypoplasia (growth due to an increase in cell number) of the thyroid and trigger many other glandular and sexual disorders. An excess is as much a problem as a deficiency. Dr. Esteban Genao states that in his practice he sees many sluggish thyroids. These people often have faulty metabolisms and fluid retention. He holds that the main reason for this is the excessive iodine that is added to refined salt.

Organic iodine (found in seaweeds, oyster, shrimps, unprocessed salt, etc.) is far more effective because it is slowly released into the body. Celtic Sea Salt naturally contains all of the elements found in the sea, including iodine.

Because iodine does not remain in the blood for long, a daily small supply of organic iodine is vital. The very minute but precise amount required can be met easily by Celtic unrefined ocean salts. There is no need to worry about having too much. Salt your foods 'to taste.' Recommendations generally are at least ¼ to ½ teaspoon daily on food. Some doctors recommend a teaspoon in one cup of water to drink in the event of stomach pains and viral infections (in children and adults).

Besides good salt, other sources of iodine should be added to the diet including: sea vegetables (sprinkle kelp over foods), shell fish and produce grown near the ocean.

For further information, read "Sea Salt's Hidden Powers," by Jacques De Langre.

Excerpts taken from "A Guide to Celtic Sea Salt" published by the Grain and Salt Society.