

## **Kids' Salt Intake Linked to Obesity Risk**

*Source: Food Product Design*

Children who consume high amounts of salt are likely to consume more sugary beverages, putting them at risk of unhealthy weight gain and obesity, according to a new study published online in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Researchers at Deakin University's Centre for Physical Activity and Nutrition Research analyzed data from the 2007 Australian National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey, which collected diet and physical activity information from 4,283 children aged 2 to 16 years. The researchers looked at the children's consumption of dietary salt, fluids and sugar sweetened drinks.

They found 62% reported consuming sugar sweetened drinks. In this group, children who consumed more salt consumed more fluid and in particular more sugar-sweetened drinks. Children who consumed more than one sugary drink per day were 34% more likely to be overweight or obese. They also found that for every 1 gram of salt consumed per day, the children drank 46 grams more fluid, with those who reported consuming sugar sweetened drinks drinking 17 grams more for every one gram of salt.

Previous Deakin research has shown children are eating around 6 grams of salt a day or four times more than is recommended. The researchers said, together with the results of this new study, it is becoming even more clear that there is a need to keep a closer eye on how much salt our children eat to help ensure they lead long and healthy lives.

"High salt diets not only put children at risk of serious long-term health problems, such as developing high blood pressure later in life which is a major cause of stroke and heart disease, they are likely to be contributing to the rates of overweight and obesity," they said.

### **Sources:**

Deakin University: Salt a new target for reducing overweight and obesity in children, Deakin University researchers find