



LIFESTYLE

# Less salt, less health risks



**A SIMPLE MEASURE** that could go a long way in enhancing public health - limit salt intake to less than 1,500 mg or about three-fourths of a tea-spoon each day - is the subject of an advisory to Americans.

The American Heart Association (AHA) has issued an advisory based on a thorough review of recent lab, animal, observational and clinical studies. This advisory is meant not only for people with medical conditions, but also for perfectly healthy people.

A limited salt intake would significantly reduce the risk of high blood pressure (BP), heart disease and stroke.

"Our recommendation is

simple in the sense that it applies to the entire US population, not just at-risk groups," said Nancy Brown, AHA's chief executive officer, the AHA journal Circulation reports.

BP affects more than 76 million adults in the US alone and one billion people worldwide, besides being a major cause

of cardiovascular disease, globally, according to a Tulane University statement. "People should not be swayed by calls for a change in sodium (salt) intake recommendations based on findings from recent studies," says Paul K. Whelton, professor of global public health at the Tulane University School

of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, New Orleans, who led the study.

"Our detailed review of these studies identified serious methodological weaknesses, which limit the value of these reports in setting or revising sodium intake policy," adds Whelton.

"Our focus should be on finding effective ways to implement, not change, the existing American Heart Association policy on sodium intake," adds Whelton.

Yet, most US adults and children consume sodium far in excess of their physiological needs and guideline recommendations - with an average daily intake more than 3,400 mg per day. Most of the sodium consumed is hidden in processed and prepared foods. **IANS**

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YOGA

## Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana (Upright big toe sequence)

**THIS UNIQUE TECHNIQUE** will help to increase your sense of balance and provide you with better concentration.

**Utthita** – meaning extended  
**Hasta** – meaning hand  
**Pada** – meaning foot  
**Angusta** – meaning big toe  
**Asana** – meaning pose  
**Standing Hand to Big Toe Pose** is an intermediate yoga posture that stretches the backs of your legs while challenging your balance. It is a great preparatory pose for deeper hamstring stretches.

### TECHNIQUE

- Begin standing in (Tadasana) with your feet together and arms at your sides. Breathe deeply and draw your awareness to the present moment. Let your mind be calm.
- Shift your weight to your left foot. Very slowly, draw your right knee up towards your chest. Bring your right arm to the inside of your right thigh. Then loop your index and middle fingers around your



- right foot's big toe. Place your left hand on your left hip.
- Straighten your spine. Strongly engage your abdominal muscles and the muscles of your left leg. Straighten your left leg, but do not lock your knee.
- Exhale and extend your right leg forward. Straighten your

- right leg as much as possible.
- Keep both hips squared forward and keep your spine straight. Do not scrunch your neck or shoulders; keep them soft and relaxed.
- Drop your right hip slightly so it is in line with your left hip. Bring your awareness to your midline — the line that runs

directly down the center of your body.

- Hold for 5-20 breaths. To release, draw your knee back into your chest, then slowly lower your foot to the floor. Come back to Mountain Pose. Then repeat on the opposite side for the same amount of time.

### BENEFITS

- Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana strengthens and stretches the legs and ankles.
- It deeply stretches the hamstrings (the back thigh muscles), while gently opening the hips, shoulders, and arms.
- This pose challenges and improves your sense of balance, which in turn helps develop greater concentration.

### CAUTION

- Do not practice this pose if you have a recent or chronic ankle or lower back injury.
- Always, work within your own range of limits and abilities.

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## ALIGN YOUR LIFE

# The Perfect Bedroom

**ARE YOU HAVING** sleepless nights? Do you suffer from regular headaches? Do you have difficulty relaxing in your bedroom? Are you constantly fighting with your partner instead of enjoying some quiet relaxing time together? If your answer is yes to any of these questions, then my guess is that your bedroom Feng Shui needs to be fixed. A bedroom is the most integral part of your house. It's a place to sleep, relax and rejuvenate. If the energy is not balanced in this area, it will affect your health and mood in no time.

So let's start with some basics. Oversized furniture should be avoided in the bedroom, as it will hamper smooth energy flow. Bedrooms by design need Yin energy or slow energy to help you relax. Therefore avoid placing any major electronic objects in your bedroom such as huge television sets or music systems. These will create harsh fire energy and take away the focus from the relationship. Many clients often ask me if placing a mirror is good in the bedroom. In my opinion it is recommended to place the mirror away from the bed rather than facing the bed. If your bed is facing a mirror, then cover the mirror with an opaque curtain to block the energy from reflecting.

Avoid using overtly bright colours to paint your bedroom. Soft and light shades are recommended for relaxation. Opt for soft light flow and use lampshades or light fittings facing towards the ceiling to create a soft atmosphere. Do not display an aquarium or a water fountain in your bedroom. These water features will enhance the energy flow and keep you active mentally all night long. Keep the bathroom door shut at all times and hang a small mirror on the bathroom door to deflect the good energy from entering the bathroom. If you are not feeling well or having too many disturbing dreams, place a small bowl of rock salt by your bedside to absorb any negative thoughts that might affect you. If the sickness persists then clean the bedroom floor with salt water to eliminate germs and stagnant energy.

Placement of the bed is also very important. Always position your bed against a solid wall support. Avoid placing your bed below a window or an AC, as it will result in disturbed sleep. Do not place your bed directly opposite the toilet door. However if your bedroom is small and it is unavoidable, then place a screen or a curtain between your bed and the bathroom door to block the unwanted energy.

Keep your bedroom simple and clutter free to enjoy a good night's sleep and enhance relationships.

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