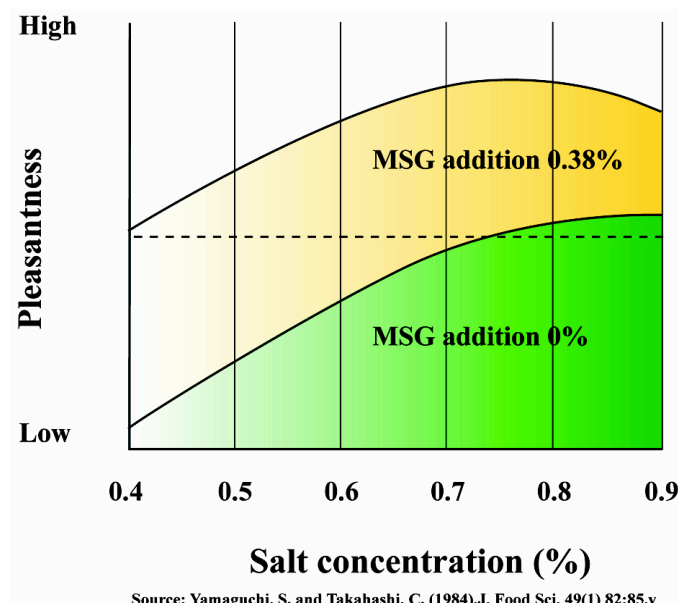


## The facts about...sodium reduction and monosodium glutamate (MSG)

Adding salt to food is a traditional and popular way of enhancing the tastiness of food and it is also used for preservation. However, many of us consume more salty foods than are good for us and excess sodium in the diet is the likely cause of preventable heart attacks and strokes. Doctors and nutritionists recommend that we reduce our salt intake, however, maintaining palatability in some foods can be difficult since removing the salt (sodium) can make them taste bland.

Using MSG to season food can help to reduce the sodium content of recipes while increasing the savoury umami taste:

1. Replacing table salt with MSG reduces the sodium content of recipes by up to 40% with no loss in palatability, as MSG contains one third of the amount of sodium (gram for gram).
2. MSG is used at far lower levels than salt. MSG contributes only one to two percent of the total sodium contained in the average diet, even where MSG is used widely in food preparation.
3. Only a small amount of MSG is required to optimise taste; using more won't do you any harm but the food might not taste as good.
4. Using a small amount of MSG in a low sodium product can make it taste as good as its high salt counterpart.





The above chart shows results from research which demonstrates that people find food with low levels of salt much more acceptable when a small amount of MSG is added. The study evaluated people's responses to different versions of a clear soup, with and without MSG and with different levels of salt. The broken horizontal line shows the threshold level below which the participants found the dish unpalatable.

We don't just eat to live, we get pleasure from eating. The savoury foods and recipes that we enjoy have a balanced, mouth-filling flavour. Often the satisfying rounded flavour is due to the fat and salt content of the food. Adding MSG to food results in salt (sodium) and fat-reduced recipes which still taste satisfying.

For more information please about glutamate please visit [www.glutamate.org](http://www.glutamate.org)