

## Low salt diet retrains taste buds, study says

**United Press International**  
NEW YORK — A low sodium diet, it turns out, eventually tricks or retrains the taste buds, according to researchers at the University of Pennsylvania.

As a result — and despite the difficulty at the start of such a diet — salty foods after a while come across as less appealing.

The report in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition is based on a taste study by scientists at the university's Monell Chemical Senses Center.

The researchers said their study supports impressions from physicians and low sodium dieters. They said also that it contradicts earlier experimental studies which contended that sodium restriction must inevitably produce

craving for salt.

The backdrop, as sketched in the report:

- Sodium balance in an organism is influenced by many factors, including disease, diet and hormonal state. In many animal species, sodium loss triggers salt intake. When laboratory animals, for example, are made sodium deficient, they increase their intake of salt solutions. They even accept strong salt solutions previously avoided.
- People also show altered taste and increased salt intake after sodium depletion, research evidence suggests. Even moderate decreases in sodium ingestion for 24 hours is supposed to induce a heightened liking for salty soups.

These reports on clinical

studies contrast with what is called anecdotal evidence — clinical impressions of doctors and self-reports from patients on low sodium diets.

The anecdotal evidence suggests that as a result of restricting sodium intake, people come to prefer less salty food, the Pennsylvania scientists said.

During their research, the investigators tried to resolve these contradictory reports.

They theorized that if the taste buds indeed work against people on low sodium diets, then some method must be found to circumvent the taste changes.

The battle with salt goes on because excessive salt intake has been traced to high blood pressure in susceptible persons.

## Patents are sticky business

**United Press International**  
NEW YORK — Judicial unfamiliarity with patents and inconsistency in the handling of patent cases in federal courts are contributing to a widening innovation gap in the United States, according to one of the nation's most prolific inventors.

Jerome Lemelson, who holds 350 patents and has 90 more pending, said when patents are disputed or infringed in the United States, in only about one case in six is the patent holder upheld by the courts. On the other hand, in Germany, Japan and Britain, the patent holder is upheld eight out of ten times, he said.

"This creates a climate of futility for inventors and makes business firms reluctant to invest in new patents. That in turn creates an innovation gap and helps to reduce the American technological edge," he said.

Lemelson said the courts' seeming prejudice involves a feeling that many patents violate the spirit of the antitrust laws and create monopolies, and

more importantly, a naive belief that the federal patent office is too generous in granting patents on devices and ideas that are "obvious," and therefore are not real inventions.

But Lemelson contends judges of the ordinary federal courts are not really competent to determine whether an idea or an invention is obvious.

Something that may seem obvious to the ordinary judge after someone has thought of it and patented it may not seem obvious at all to the Patent Office's staff of experienced examiners or to persons with technological expertise in the particular field.

"What it amounts to," Lemelson said, "is that the American inventor and the company whose business depends on patent protection are up against a double standard of government enforcement — and the standards of the Patent Office and the ordinary federal courts don't jibe."

Prof. Irving Kayton, who teaches patent law at George Washington University in

Washington, D.C., said the trouble is not so much that the district courts are too hard on patents as that they are inconsistent in determining whether an idea or a device is patentable.

Agreeing in general with Lemelson's assessment, Kayton called the situation in recent years a "nightmare." Federal judges follow a multiplicity of standards, he said; even change their own standards sometimes as often as ten times in two years.

He said the new patent appeals court created last October will follow sound law and

this should result in uniform standards ultimately.

Another beneficial step, Lemelson said, would be to institute a formal challenge period for claiming new patents are invalid and unenforceable.

Lemelson said "the industrial establishment" is partly to blame for the situation, as he sees it. "Too often, the inventor who is legitimately trying to protect his rights faces a battery of lawyers with many bags of tricks aimed at burying him in paper work and in legal bills for litigation that will drag on for years."

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## Horse shooting prompts investigation of ranch

**United Press International**  
HOUSTON — The shotgun shooting of a 9-year-old horse at a ranch for neglected or mistreated animals has caused officials to intensify efforts to find a new home for the animal shelter, officials said.

Investigators Tuesday said they had no clues or motives into the shooting of Altas, who was shot twice with a shotgun last week. The horse scrambled for cover in the barn, but collapsed and died of wounds to the abdomen and chest, Harris County Reserve Deputy George Huebner said.

Huebner said the shooting was the latest in a series of incidents at the Human Ranch since

October. Equipment and a horse have been stolen.

"It's like stealing from an orphanage," Huebner said. "It's more likely vandals, because there have been reports of trouble with horses in that area of town."

Huebner said apparently there were no witnesses to the shooting that killed Altas, one of 26 horses rounded up by Harris County Animal Cruelty Enforcement deputies last summer and sent to the Humane Ranch for rehabilitation.

"The fact that buckshot was used to kill the horse means there are no markings that can be traced to a gun," Huebner said.

Huebner said the shooting prompted officials to renew efforts to find a new home for the ranch, which has operated on rent property for more than three years.

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