



Myths and Facts - MSG

Chef Training and Resources

April 18, 2020. Share: [f](#) [t](#)

Myths and Facts on MSG

Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) is the sodium salt of glutamic acid. Identified more than 100 years ago, it is used as a seasoning to enhance and balance the savoury taste of food, especially in Asia. Despite its widespread use, consumer misunderstanding has given rise to many myths that are being circulated in recent years. Here we list out some common myths and facts on MSG as a food ingredient.

MSG is synthetic or unnatural.

MSG is the sodium salt of glutamic acid, one of the most abundant naturally occurring non-essential amino acids.

MSG is not stable.

MSG is the most stable salt formed of glutamate, which helps to best bring the sought after “umami” taste.




MSG is not well studied.

According to NSW Food Authority, MSG is one of the most extensively researched substances in food for more than 40 years. Numerous international scientific assessments have been conducted, involving hundreds of studies.

MSG causes ‘Chinese Restaurant Syndrome’.

Despite hundreds of international studies there is no conclusive evidence linking MSG to asthma or ‘Chinese Restaurant Syndrome’. A very small number of people who are sensitive to a range of foods, especially with asthma, may be sensitive to glutamate.

Difference between No Added MSG and NO MSG

	<p>MSG is found naturally in some foods such as tomatoes, parmesan cheese, potatoes, mushrooms and other vegetables and fruit. Products containing such ingredients can claim no added MSG however they may contain naturally occurring MSG within.</p>
	<p>The product has no naturally occurring or added MSG.</p>
	<p>The product has monosodium glutamate added.</p>

MSG is toxic to our body.

According to the NSW Food Authority, the human body treats MSG as natural as glutamate found in food. For instance, the body does not distinguish between free glutamate from tomatoes, cheese or mushrooms and the glutamate from MSG added to foods. Glutamate is glutamate, whether naturally present or from MSG.

MSG is high in sodium.

MSG contains 1/3 the amount of sodium as table salt (13% vs. 40%) and is used in much smaller amounts.*

*According to the NSW Food Authority.

MSG enhances saltiness of dishes.

MSG helps offering great tasting foods and it can help to reduce the salt content of foods, thereby supporting consumers to lower their salt intake without giving in on taste.

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