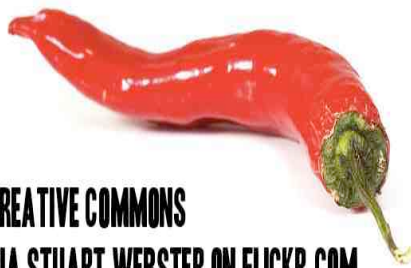


## Spicy food linked to higher testosterone levels

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CREATIVE COMMONS

VIA STUART WEBSTER ON FLICKR.COM

Scientists in France say they have found a link between eating spicy food and high levels of testosterone in men.

Testosterone is a hormone and steroid that is

found in male and female bodies that is responsible for sexual development. Men generally produce it at a 20 times greater rate than women. It is usually a sign of male bravado and masculinity. Men with higher levels of testosterone are commonly seen as being more sexually active, arrogant, brave and bigger risk takers. Report co-author Laurent Begue said the findings of his study were "in line with a lot of research showing a link between testosterone and financial, sexual and behavioural risk-taking".

Professor Begue's study looked at the degree to which 114 men aged between 18 and 44 liked spicy food. The men were asked to add a hot pepper sauce to a dish of mashed potatoes. They then had to evaluate the spiciness of what they ate. The researchers tested the saliva of the men and found that those who put more pepper sauce on their potatoes were the ones with higher levels of testosterone. Britain's health service website nhs.uk said the study was too small to prove a definite link between spice and testosterone. It said many other things could influence a preference for spicy food. These include genetic, cultural and psychological factors.

Sources: *The Independent* / *nhs.uk* / *Wikipedia.org*

## Writing

Spicy food is much better than food with no spices. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scientists / spicy food / testosterone / masculinity / risk takers / findings / research / study / hot pepper sauce / saliva / health service / preference / genetic / cultural

## True / False

- The scientists who conducted this study were in Switzerland. T / F
- Men produce as much as 20 times more testosterone than women. T / F
- Testosterone is linked to men taking more risks in life. T / F
- A co-author said the findings confirmed other research in this area. T / F
- A study looked at how 114 men and women perceived spicy food. T / F
- Researchers tested the saliva of men to find a testosterone-spice link. T / F
- Britain's health service said the findings showed a definite link. T / F
- The health service said only a few things made men eat spicy food. T / F

## Synonym Match

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. link        | a. accountable    |
| 2. responsible | b. assess         |
| 3. generally   | c. boldness       |
| 4. bravado     | d. level          |
| 5. findings    | e. show           |
| 6. degree      | f. connection     |
| 7. evaluate    | g. considerations |
| 8. prove       | h. conclusions    |
| 9. definite    | i. usually        |
| 10. factors    | j. exact          |

## Discussion – Student A

- How can food change people's personality?
- What do you think of spicy food?
- What do you think spicy food does to women?
- Is it important for a man to be very masculine?
- What risks have you taken in your life?
- Would you eat more spicy food if it made you braver?
- Is risk-taking good or bad? Why?
- What are your favourite spices (and why)?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. high levels of testosterone                | a. greater rate           |
| 2. Testosterone is a hormone                  | b. prove a definite link  |
| 3. Men generally produce it at a 20 times     | c. with a lot of research |
| 4. a sign of male bravado and                 | d. of mashed potatoes     |
| 5. the findings of his study were in line     | e. and steroid            |
| 6. add a hot pepper sauce to a dish           | f. of testosterone        |
| 7. evaluate the spiciness                     | g. in men                 |
| 8. the ones with higher levels                | h. for spicy food         |
| 9. the study was too small to                 | i. of what they ate       |
| 10. other things could influence a preference | j. masculinity            |

## Discussion – Student B

- Is mashed potato better with or without spice?
- Which country has the best spiciest food?
- Is too much testosterone in a man dangerous?
- What spices are good for our health?
- Does this study mean Thai, Mexican and Indian men are the most masculine?
- Is there any food that should not have some spice in it?
- What other things are spices good for?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Spelling

- Testosterone is a enmhroo and steroid
- leipsnrso for sexual development
- Men rnylaleeg produce it
- a sign of male bravado and icuasymitln
- rotaragn, brave and bigger risk takers
- sexual and oaelruhvabi risk-taking
- the eerdge to which 114 men aged...
- a hot pepper secua
- ateluave the spiciness of what they ate
- a itefiedn link
- a frrcnepeee for spicy food
- aicolspcyogh factors

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. a	3. i	4. c	5. h
6. d	7. b	8. e	9. j	10. g

## Role Play

### Role A – French fries

You think French fries are the best food. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their food isn't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): egg sandwiches, rice and curry or green salad.

### Role B – Egg sandwiches

You think egg sandwiches are the best food. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their food isn't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): French fries, rice and curry or green salad.

### Role C – Rice and curry

You think rice and curry is the best food. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their food isn't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): egg sandwiches, French fries or green salad.

### Role D – Green salad

You think green salad is the best food. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their food isn't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): egg sandwiches, rice and curry or French fries.

## Speaking – Food

Rank these with your partner. Put the most delicious at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| • French fries   | • chilli con carne |
| • rice and curry | • pizza            |
| • egg sandwich   | • garlic bread     |
| • sushi          | • green salad      |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.