

Spicy Food Increases Testosterone Levels, Scientists Say

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. bravado /brə'vɑː.dou/ a show of courage, especially when unnecessary and dangerous, to make people admire you
Example: It was an act of bravado that made him ask his boss to resign.
2. arrogant /'er.ə.gənt/ unpleasantly proud and behaving as if you are more important than, or know more than, other people
Example: I found him arrogant and rude.
3. risk taker /risk 'teɪ.kə/ someone who often takes risks
Example: They are risk-takers who either make a lot of money or lose a lot.
4. saliva /sə'laɪ.və/ the liquid produced in your mouth to keep the mouth wet and to help to prepare food to be digested
Example: Cold and flu viruses spread through droplets, like tears and saliva -- but also through hand-to-hand contact, the doctor adds.
5. genetic /dʒə'net.ɪk/ belonging or relating to genes (= parts of the DNA in cells) received by each animal or plant from its parents
Example: The condition is a genetic inheritance.



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 manliness. 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.

DISCUSSION

1. How can food change people's personality?
2. What risks have you taken in your life?
3. Would you eat more spicy food if it made you braver?
4. What are your favorite spices (and why)?
5. Which country has the best spiciest food?