

What is a Himalayan salt lamp?

Himalayan sea salt is believed to be composed of dried remnants of the original, primal sea dating back to planet Earth's creation. See [health benefits of Celtic sea salt and Himalayan salt](#). These lamps are actually made from Millions of Years Old Himalayan salt.

It's true! They're called salt lamps or salt rock lamps, and yes, they're actually made from [pink Himalayan salt](#) and are able to light your surroundings — but they're really not bought for their moderate lighting abilities. There are major claims that a Himalayan salt lamp does much more than provide you with a pretty glow. Himalayan salt lamp benefits supposedly include decreasing air pollution, negative ions and electrosmog caused by electronic devices in addition to symptom reduction for people suffering from asthma, allergies and other illnesses.

Are there really healthy Himalayan salt lamp benefits, or are they just a glowing, earthy addition to your home?

WHAT IS A HIMALAYAN SALT LAMP AND DOES IT WORK?

Real Himalayan salt lamps are actually solid blocks of Himalayan salt that have been hand-carved. Deep underground mines in Khewra, Pakistan, located on the western edge of the Himalayan Mountains, are the only source of true Himalayan pink salt. The color of Himalayan salt lamps ranges from a light pink to a pinkish orange with the hue a result of the mineral concentration. Within the hollowed-out center of this block of salt is a light bulb that emits both light and heat. A salt lamp is not a lamp at all if it doesn't have the light and heat source within it. Without that, it's just a block of salt.

Salt is [hygroscopic](#), which means it attracts water molecules to itself. Being the big hunk of salt that it is, a Himalayan salt lamp is believed to work by attracting the water molecules. This water vapor can also carry [indoor air pollutants](#) like mold, bacteria and allergens. Once the water vapor comes in contact with the salt lamp, the pollutants are believed to remain trapped in the salt. Since the lamp is heated, the salt dries out and is able to continue the cycle of attracting water vapor and pollutants, releasing the water vapor back into the air but holding on to the health-hazardous pollutants.

Just looking at the glow of a Himalayan salt lamp can be calming, which is therapeutic in and of itself, but what about the other health claims? To date, there aren't any scientific studies focusing specifically on Himalayan salt lamp benefits. However, there is good reason to believe that a real Himalayan salt lamp may provide some health benefits given the other salt research out there as well as many encouraging user testimonies.

According to the Lung Institute, salt (in general) has the following health properties:

Antibacterial

Anti-inflammatory

Loosens excessive mucus and speeds up mucociliary transport

Removes pathogens (ie., airborne pollen)

Reduces IgE level (immune system oversensitivity)

Himalayan Salt Lamp Benefits

1. Air Purification

Out of all of the possible Himalayan salt lamp benefits, air purification is often the quintessential goal for most buyers. [Air-purifying house plants](#) are often bought for this reason as well. There is no doubt that cleaner air in your home is better for your health.

According to research published by the American Society for Horticultural Science, the main component of air pollution or smog is ozone, which is most commonly linked with outdoor air, but it also makes its way into indoor living spaces like your home or office.

Himalayan salt lamp by its salty nature is able to easily attract water vapor to it. With a Himalayan salt lamp by its salty nature is able to easily attract water vapor to it. With this water vapor often comes indoor air pollutants, including allergens, mold and bacteria. When the water hits the heated lamp, the salt traps the pollutants but releases the water vapor. This cycle repeats while the lamp is on and warm. By removing pollutants from the air, the salt lamp leaves you with cleaner, healthier air.

2. Reduction in Electromagnetic Radiation and Airborne Infections

So many things around us nowadays release [electromagnetic radiation](#) in the form of unhealthy positive ions — things like your cell phone, computer and television, just to name a few. This electromagnetic radiation (EM), aka electric smog, may be invisible but is believed to cause some serious long-term effects. Constant exposure to EM radiation is known primarily to cause fatigue, increase stress and weaken the immune system.

There have been more than 2,000 studies exposing the toxic effects of electromagnetic fields from all sources. Scientists have come to the scary conclusion that “chronic exposure to even low-level radiation (like that from cell phones) can cause a variety of cancers, impair immunity, and contribute to Alzheimer’s disease and [dementia](#), heart disease, and many other ailments.”

An awesome way to increase exposure to negative ions is to spend more time in nature, especially around water. Himalayan salt lamps are said to emit negative ions in small amounts and cancel out positive ones. By neutralizing electromagnetic radiation, they may help reduce the negative health effects of harmful electric smog. Balancing positive and negative ions also may help reduce airborne infections.

3. Eases Asthma and Allergy Symptoms

Himalayan salt is now used in inhalers to bring [relief to asthma](#) and allergy sufferers. Salt therapy is also used to treat chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) patients. [COPD](#) is a debilitating and degenerative lung disease characterized by the restriction of airflow in and out of the lungs. According to the Lung Institute, “Some people have found salt therapy to be an effective option for relieving symptoms of lung disease, resulting in easier breathing.”

Numerous clinical studies have demonstrated highly impressive salt therapy benefits, including helping:

85 percent of mild and moderate asthma cases

75 percent of severe asthma cases

97 percent of chronic [bronchitis](#), [bronchiectasis](#) and [cystic fibrosis](#) cases

Salt therapy for breathing problems is said to have begun with Siberian salt mine workers in the later 1800s who had a surprisingly small number of respiratory problems compared to people around them with less salty professions. Nowadays, you can find salt caves at various spas, and this salt cave experience is also trying to be re-created with the invention of salt pipe inhalers. Salt lamps are another smaller-scale way to bring the salt cave experience (and hopefully the health benefits) home.

4. Mood Booster and Sleep Promoter

Another possible health benefit of the Himalayan salt lamp is a [reduction in anxiety symptoms](#). According to color therapy as well as general human enjoyment, the warm pinkish to orange glow of the salt lamp is a calming and happy presence in a room. Additionally, as a real piece of nature, Himalayan salt gives off negative ions like a waterfall (but in much smaller amounts). Since Himalayan salt lamps release negative ions into the air, they can help reduce anxiety and also encourage a relaxing atmosphere for sleep. Many people like to keep salt lamps in their bedrooms for their calming effect.

Why are negative ions so great? You can't taste, smell or see them, but they're some impressive molecules. Once negative ions reach the bloodstream, they're believed to produce biochemical reactions that increase levels of the mood chemical [serotonin](#), helping alleviate depression, [relieve stress](#) and boost daytime energy.