



# The MSG Reaction Challenge



**Help us reach well-reasoned conclusions about the safety and benefits of monosodium glutamate use.**

**Monosodium glutamate (MSG)** was first condemned in 1968, when physician Robert Ho Man Kwok contacted the New England Journal of Medicine describing Chinese Restaurant Syndrome: “[It] usually begins 15 to 20 minutes after I have eaten the first dish, and lasts for about two hours,” noted Kwok. “The most prominent symptoms are numbness at the back of the neck, gradually radiating to both arms and the back, general weakness, and palpitations.” Kwok’s report triggered a wave of panic that has persisted for more than half a century.

Widespread misinformation has long undermined research by leading scientific organizations with a mandate to safeguard public health. The FDA concluded that MSG poses no threat to the general public but that negative reactions of brief duration might occur in some people. Approximately 1.8% of the population is sensitive to MSG – that’s not much higher than the rate of peanut (1.1%) or shellfish (2%) allergies.

In the U.S., we ingest one-half to one gram of glutamate per day from food additives (in Taiwan, the average person ingests up to six times that amount). We ingest 20 to 40 times more naturally occurring free glutamate than we do MSG. Studies have shown that there is little difference between the MSG added to foods and the glutamate found naturally. Despite extensive research, MSG remains poorly understood – just ask your friends and family what they think – and don’t you dare add MSG to your recipes (even though you will receive rave reviews).

We’re asking you to put our MSG where your mouth is. We hope you’ll join us in taking and sharing the results of The MSG Challenge. Please be in touch if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you! Doug Cress & Molly Ambrose of Glutamate.com.

## The MSG Reaction Challenge

1. Mix one teaspoon (1 tsp) of MSG with at least eight ounces of water. Stir until dissolved.
2. Drink the MSG solution an upcoming meal. It won’t taste good, so drink quickly.
3. Monitor your physical reaction at 30 minutes and 90 minute intervals.
4. Once complete, please take our two-minute MSG survey at [glutamate.com](http://glutamate.com).