

Spicy foods may be answer to longer life

By Ariana Eunjung Cha, Washington Post

There's probably no food quite as baffling as the chili pepper.

A bite of a habanero, jalapeño or cayenne can pack such an ouch that all logic says they should repel those who attempt to consume them. Yet for centuries humans have not only eaten such spicy foods – but enjoyed them. In recent years, worldwide consumption of hot spices has grown dramatically, fueled by the popularity of Mexican salsas, Thai and Indian curries and the like.

Scientists seeking to better understand the alluring properties of hot foods have found evidence that we may be so drawn to them because they are good for us. While the research is still preliminary, it suggests spicy food may have all kinds of health benefits ranging from boosting metabolism and preventing gastric damage to reducing the risk of heart disease and cancer.

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