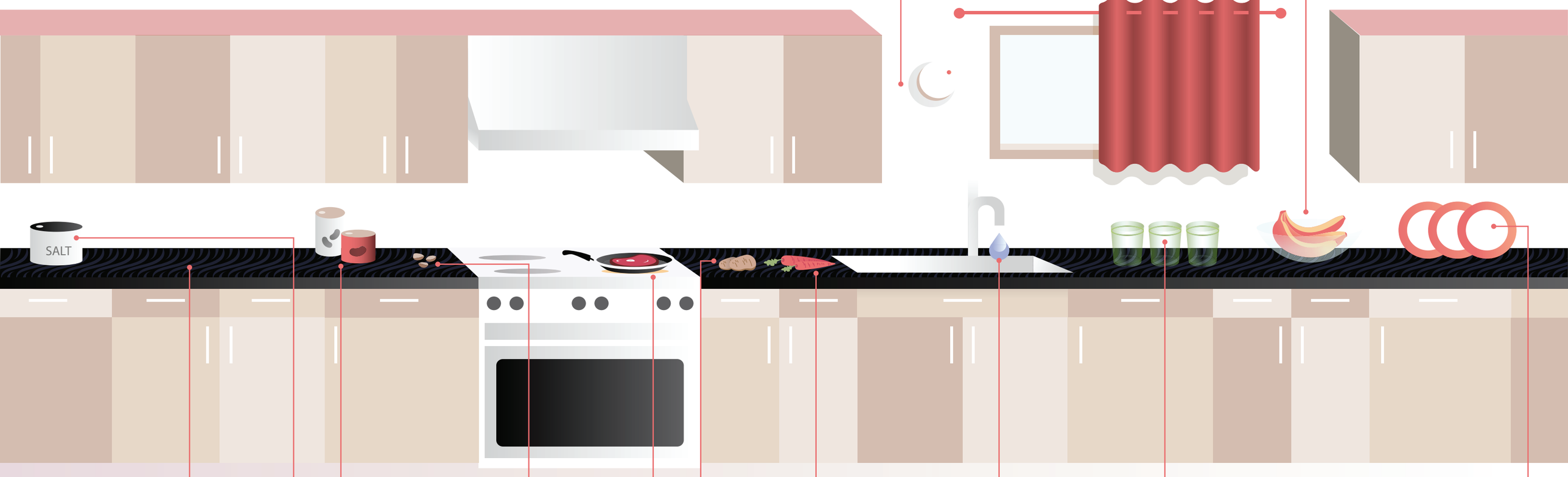
THIS RADIOACTIVE LIFE

A picocurie per kilogram (pCi/kg) measures the concentration of radioactivity in a material by how many of its nuclei decay per minute in each kilogram. 1 picocurie represents the decay of 2.22 radium nuclei per minute.

Design by Sandbox Studio, Chicago with Ana Kova



Smoke detectors
Smoke detectors use tiny amounts of radioactive americium-241 to alert you when there's smoke in the air.

Bananas
3,521 pCi/kg
Potassium-40-rich bananas are used as an informal measurement of radioactivity in foods, known as the banana equivalent dose.

Granite countertops
Granite contains uranium and thorium, which emits radon.

Low-sodium salt
3,000 pCi/kg
Low-sodium salt is made with potassium chloride instead of just sodium chloride.

Kidney beans and lima beans
4,645 pCi/kg

Brazil nuts
6,600 pCi/kg

Brazil nuts are the most radioactive food. They contain radium in addition to the potassium-40 that makes kidney and lima beans, red meat, carrots and white potatoes slightly radioactive.

Red meat
3,000 pCi/kg

Carrots
3,400 pCi/kg

White potatoes
3,400 pCi/kg

Water
170 pCi/kg (on average)
The radioactivity of water from the tap varies depending on where you live. Radium is the most common source of water's radioactivity.

Glassware
Antique greenish and yellowish glassware contains uranium as a colorant.

Ceramics
Some ceramic glazes contain uranium as a colorant, especially red-orange ceramics made before the 1960s.

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