SSaSS - Determining the Effects of Salt Reduction on Stroke: The China Salt Substitute and Stroke Study

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Facts

• Stroke is the second leading cause of mortality and a common cause of disability among adults worldwide.
• In 2010, stroke was the third most common cause of death in Chinese urban areas, accounting for 20% of all deaths; while, in rural areas, stroke was the leading cause of death, causing 23% of all deaths.
• In rural China, average salt intake is 12-15g per day, a key risk for hypertension and stroke.

Background:

• High blood pressure contributes to increased risk of stroke. Lowering blood pressure can be achieved by using a salt substitute to lower salt intake.
• Sodium reduction is a particularly attractive option for central government action in China. The manufacture and sale of salt and salt substitute in China is a state monopoly with central government control of the entire production and delivery chain, including pricing.

Aims:

• To see the effects of replacing salt with a reduced sodium salt substitute on the risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney disease and death from any cause.

Methods:

• In the largest study of its kind, 21,000 people in rural China have completed the first year of this five-year study.

Impact:

• Effective sodium-reduction programs have great potential to positively impact the urban-rural health divide in China. Rural areas of China have benefited least of all from China’s economic growth, and strategies to enhance their conditions are a specific focus of the Chinese government.
• Centrally implemented, population-based approaches to salt reduction have been identified by the World Health Organization as amongst the most cost-effective possible strategies for vascular disease prevention in developed and developing countries alike.

Contact

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