

Sodium's influence on blood pressure statistically insignificant, new research says

September 8 2014



A new study published in *American Journal of Hypertension* finds evidence that increased Body Mass Index, age, and non-sodium dietary factors are much more closely related to increases in systolic blood pressure than sodium intake.

The study, "Relationship between nutrition and blood pressure: A cross-sectional analysis from the NutriNet-Santé study, a French web-based cohort study," measured the effects of [sodium intake](#), Body Mass Index, [physical activity](#), alcohol consumption, and non-sodium dietary factors on the blood pressure of 8,670 French adults and concluded that Body Mass Index, age, and [alcohol intake](#) were all strongly linked to blood

pressure increases. Sodium intake, however, was found to be statistically insignificant in relation to blood pressure outcomes. Higher consumption of fruits and vegetables was shown to significantly lower blood pressure, while increased physical activity showed no noticeable effect. None of the individuals measured received pharmacological treatment for hypertension during the study.

In a statement accompanying the publication of these findings, Dr. Jacques Blacher, the study's lead author, said that new research like this should play a prominent role in determining public health initiatives for reducing epidemic hypertension: "Hypertension is the world's most prevalent chronic disease. It affects more than 30% of adults aged 25 and above, and accounts for 9.4 million deaths every year. Given its increasing prevalence and the difficulty we as a global health community have in managing it, more should be done to identify causal behavioral relationships to blood pressure outcomes that can lead to better strategies for preventing hypertension."

"The observational study of Lelong et al. emphasizes the association of [systolic blood pressure](#) with BMI." said Dr. Theodore Kotchen, Associate Editor of *American Journal of Hypertension*. "Additionally, the study addresses the relative importance of BMI with specific components of the diet as possible contributors to hypertension."

The study's authors noted that, though the lifestyle factors measured in the study are often targeted by physicians as areas for adjustment in patients with hypertension, there is surprisingly little data on their individual effects on [blood pressure](#) within pharmacologically untreated populations.

More information: Relationship between nutrition and blood pressure: A cross-sectional analysis from the NutriNet-Santé study, a French web-based cohort study, *American Journal of Hypertension*, 2014.

Provided by Oxford University Press

Citation: Sodium's influence on blood pressure statistically insignificant, new research says (2014, September 8) retrieved 6 May 2024 from

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