Promoting sodium intake reduction in Hong Kong

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In recent years, salt intake reduction has been incorporated as one of the key areas in health promotion, particularly prevention and control of hypertension in Hong Kong. The establishment of the Committee on Reduction of Salt and Sugar in Food by the Hong Kong Government in 2015 is a milestone indicating official concern over this issue. Some academia also engaged in promoting sodium intake reduction in Hong Kong, despite there is a lack of coordination among these activities.

Dr Chau is one of the academics who works in this area. As a first step, she developed a Chinese Health Literacy Scale for Low Salt Consumption – Hong Kong population (CHLSalt-HK) to support assessment of health literacy of older people related to salt consumption. Validation results were released in PLOS One\(^1\). Further validation works including investigation of concurrent validity and predictive validity are in progress.

Recently, a study investigating the preferred food saltiness level and the willingness to consume low-sodium food in a Chinese population has been published in the Journal of Nutrition Health and Aging\(^2\). The results highlighted that the willingness to consume low-sodium foods depended heavily on the taste of such foods, instead of the known health benefit of it. It shreds light on the fact that promotion of reduction of sodium intake may not merely emphasis the health benefits, but at the same time improving the taste of low-sodium food is of importance.

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References:
Hidayana, I., Februhartanty J., Parady VA.

Violations of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes: Indonesia context
Public Health Nutrition. ISSN: 1475-2727, June 2016, pp. 1-9
http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=10373575&fileId=S1368980016001567

To measure compliance with the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (‘the Code’) in Indonesia, a cross-sectional survey using the Interagency Group on Breastfeeding Monitoring protocol was undertaken. A total of 874 women (382 pregnant women and 492 breast-feeding mothers of infants below 6 months) and 77 health workers were recruited from 18 participating health facilities. The study also analysed a total of 44 labels of breast-milk substitute products, 27 television commercials for growing-up milk (for children >12 months) of 9 brands and 34 print advertisements of fourteen brands.

The study found that 20 % of the women had received advice and information on the use of breast-milk substitutes and 72 % had seen promotional materials for breast-milk substitutes. About 15 % reported receiving free samples and 16 % received gifts. Nearly a quarter of the health workers confirmed receiving visits from representatives of breast-milk substitute companies. Two health workers reported having received gifts from the companies. The most common labelling violations found were statements or visuals that discouraged breast-feeding and the absence of mention about the consideration of local climate in the expiration date.

Violations of the Code by health workers, breast-milk substitute companies and their representatives were found in all provinces studied. A regular monitoring system should be in place to ensure improved compliance with and enforcement of the Code.

Shariff, ZM., Lin, KG., Sariman, S., Siew CT., Yusof, BNM., Mun, CY., Lee HS., Mohamad, M.

Higher dietary energy density is associated with stunting but not overweight and obesity in a sample of urban Malaysian children
Ecology of Food and Nutrition 2016, Vol. 55, Iss. 4, pp. 378-389

Although diets with high energy density are associated with increased risk of overweight and obesity, it is not known whether such diets are associated with undernutrition. This study assessed the relationship between dietary energy density (ED) and nutritional status of 745 urban 1- to 10-year-old children. Dietary intakes were obtained using food recall and record for two days. Dietary energy density was based on food and caloric beverages. Higher dietary ED was associated with lower intakes of carbohydrate, sugar, vitamins C and D, and calcium but higher fat, fibre, iron, and folate intakes. While intakes of fruits and milk/dairy products decreased, meat, fish, and legume intakes increased with higher dietary ED. Stunting, but not other growth problems, was associated with higher dietary ED. Future studies should confirm the cause-and-effect relationship between higher dietary ED and stunting.
24-h urinary sodium excretion is associated with obesity in a cross-sectional sample of Australian schoolchildren

Grimes, CA., Riddell, LJ., Campbell, KJ., He, FJ., Nowson, CA.  
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Emerging evidence indicates that dietary Na may be linked to obesity; however, it is unclear whether this relationship is independent of energy intake (EI). The aim of this study was to assess the association between Na intake and measures of adiposity, including BMI z score, weight category and waist:height ratio (WHtR), in a sample of Australian schoolchildren. This was a cross-sectional study of schoolchildren aged 4–12 years. Na intake was assessed via one 24-h urine collection. BMI was converted to age- and sex-specific z scores, and WHtR was used to define abdominal obesity. In children aged ≥8 years, EI was determined via one 24-h dietary recall. Of the 666 children with valid urine samples 55 % were male (average age 9·3 (SD 1·8) years). In adjusted models an additional 17 mmol/d of Na was associated with a 0·10 higher BMI z score (95 % CI 0·07, 0·13), a 23 % (OR 1·23; 95 % CI 1·16, 1·31) greater risk of being overweight/obese and a 15 % (OR 1·15; 95 % CI 1·09, 1·23) greater risk of being centrally obese. In the subsample of 8–12-year-old children (n 458), adjustment for EI did not markedly alter the associations between Na and adiposity outcomes. Using a robust measure of daily Na intake we found a positive association between Na intake and obesity risk in Australian schoolchildren, which could not be explained by total energy consumption. To determine whether this is a causal relationship, longitudinal studies, with high-quality measures of Na and EI, are required.

**Breastfeeding outcome; effect of prelacteal feeding: a cross-sectional survey**

Chagan, FK., Fayyaz, SM., Aamir, IS.  
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The objectives of this study was to determine the prevalence of prelacteal feeding among mothers of Pakistan and to find out the various concepts behind this practice and fundamentally to establish the association of prelacteal feeding with breastfeeding outcomes. A large group of, both educated and uneducated, mothers knew about PLF administration (90.5%). Out of these, 70% mothers routinely give prelactal feeds, with readymade ghutti and honey being the most widely used supplements, 19.5% and 37.2% respectively. However, their reasons for doing so differed significantly. Family tradition (27.8%) and religious credence (21.8%) are the most popular reasons for practicing prelacteal feeding. The other minor reasons are breast milk insufficiency, prevention of dehydration, hypoglycaemia, preparation of the gastrointestinal tract for digestion and to quench thirst. However, majority of the subjects were aware of the benefits of breastfeeding and 99% mothers breastfed their children.
Mirkovic, KR., Perrine, CG., Subedi, GR., Mebrahtu, S., Dahal, P., Jefferds, MED.

*Micronutrient powder use and infant and young child feeding practices in an integrated program*


Integrated infant and young child feeding (IYCF)/micronutrient powder (MNP) programs are increasingly used to address poor IYCF practices and micronutrient deficiencies in low-income settings; however, little is known about how MNP use may affect IYCF practices. We describe how MNP use was associated with IYCF practices in a pilot program in select districts of Nepal where free MNP for children 6-23 months were added to an existing IYCF platform. Representative cross-sectional surveys were conducted in pilot districts with mothers of eligible children at 3 months (plains ecozone, n=1054) or 15 months (hill ecozone, rural only, n=654) after implementation of an integrated MNP/IYCF program. We used logistic regression to assess how IYCF practices varied by MNP use (none, 1-30, 30-60 sachets). At both time points, consuming 30-60 MNP sachets vs none was associated with achieving minimum dietary diversity and minimum acceptable diet. In the 3 month survey consuming 30-60 MNP sachets vs none was also associated with achieving minimum meal frequency and continued breastfeeding at 2 years. In this setting, addition of MNP to an existing platform of IYCF messaging did not appear detrimental to IYCF practices.

*Child, teenage and family nutrition*

Engler-Stringer, R., Schaefer, J., Ridalls, T.

*An examination of the roles played by early adolescent children in interactions with their local food environment*

*Canadian Journal of Public Health; 107(Suppl. 1), Ottawa: Canadian Public Health Association, 2016, eS48-eS52*

The purpose of this study was to examine how pre- and early adolescent (10-14 years old) children from a wide range of neighbourhoods interact with their local food environment (FE), with a focus on the foods and food sources they access and their locations. Children in this age group are developing independence and mobility within (and beyond) their home neighbourhoods but are somewhat geographically bound as they cannot yet drive.

*Food purchase behaviour, food marketing and food policy*

Subanti, S., Respatiwulan, S., Hakim, W., Rahman, A.

*The impact of direct cash transfer program (BLT) on household consumption in Central Java province*


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Direct Cash Transfer, known as BLT in Indonesia, is a poverty-based assistance and social protection aimed at the fulfilment of basic needs, ease live burden, and improved quality of life of the poor. Implementation of the program is straightforward, so the benefits can be felt by the beneficiaries of the program. Early, BLT program initiated by the government in 2005/2006 and continued in 2008/09. The program is expected not only to accelerate the reduction of the number of poor people but also how to maintain and enhance the purchasing power so that welfare is safeguarded. In this study, the impact of direct cash transfer program year 2008/09 on household consumption, included food, non-food, education, and health. Data and methodology for this study was used national economic social survey and simple difference in difference. This study found three findings based on this analysis. First, direct cash transfer increased total household consumption (included food and non-food); Second, direct cash transfer increased household...
consumption for health but it decreased household consumption for education; Third, direct cash transfer increased household consumption for paddy, tuber, vegetable, and tobacco but it decreased household consumption for fish, meat, egg and milk, fruit, and package food and drink.

Chakraborty, LB., Sahakian, M., Uma, R., Shenoy, M., Erkman, S.  
*Urban food consumption in metro Manila: interdisciplinary approaches towards apprehending practices, patterns, and impacts*  

Food consumption is a local activity related to environmental impacts at different scales. Yet, the link between eating food as a social and cultural practice and the global implications of food consumption has not been sufficiently explored. We adopt a multidisciplinary approach to relate social practices with the biophysical flows of food products at the household level. Focusing on middle-class households in Metro Manila, the Philippines, we conduct qualitative interviews to highlight preferences, habits, and perceptions about food consumption. In parallel, we collect quantitative information on food purchased. We relate our results to national trends by analyzing the recent evolution of national food expenditures. Finally, we review environmental impacts related to main food categories. Our research points to the significance of socioeconomic factors on food consumption, notably the presence of domestic help or the professional situation of household members. One main finding is the identification of eating out as an important and growing trend in Asian cities, which causes a shift of resource consumption and related environmental impacts from the household to the service sector.

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