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Topic: Law and regulation in public health nutrition

Title: Sodium and potassium intake in South Africa: an evaluation of 24-hour urine collections in a White, Black and Indian population

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The median sodium and potassium excretion was 122.9 and 33.5mmol/day, respectively and the salt intake was 7.2g/day. The majority (92.8%) of the population did not meet the recommended potassium intake per day and 35.7% consumed between 6 and 9.9g of salt per day. Potassium excretion showed a linear relationship with salt intake (p-trend ≤0.001). No correlation was observed between systolic or diastolic blood pressure and salt intake (p-trend=0.03 and 0.4). The median sodium-to-potassium ratio was 3.5:0, which is three times the recommend ratio.

Conclusion:

These findings support the South African government’s sodium reduction legislation, as well as global initiatives, but more consideration should be given to promoting the intake of potassium-rich foods, as this will have a greater public health impact than focussing only on the reduction of sodium in the diet.