

[DH urges public to heighten vigilance against hypertension in support of World Hypertension Day](#)

The Department of Health (DH) urged members of the public to pay attention to their blood pressure level with regular checks and lead a healthy lifestyle with early diagnosis to fight against non-communicable diseases including hypertension to support World Hypertension Day held on May 17 every year.

An adult is said to have hypertension if systolic blood pressure is persistently higher than or equal to 140 millimetres of mercury (mmHg) and/or diastolic blood pressure is persistently higher than or equal to 90 mmHg. Hypertension is a silent killer and seldom causes symptoms until complications develop. If left uncontrolled or not properly treated, hypertension can lead to serious health problems including stroke, heart attack and kidney failure.

The [Population Health Survey \(PHS\) 2020-22](#) conducted by the DH revealed that nearly 30 per cent of non-institutionalised persons aged 15 to 84 had hypertension in Hong Kong, and the prevalence of hypertension increased with age from less than 5 per cent among persons aged 15 to 24 to over a half among persons aged 65 to 84. Among those with hypertension, more than 40 per cent were not aware of having raised blood pressure until attending the PHS health examination.

A spokesman for the DH said that adopting a healthy lifestyle is essential for the prevention of hypertension. It is also one of the key self-care management ways to control hypertension. Members of the public should maintain an optimal body weight and waist circumference, cut back on salt and have a balanced diet, be physically active and limit sedentary behaviour. They are also advised to refrain from drinking alcohol, to not smoke and avoid secondhand smoke.

In particular, the detrimental effects of high salt consumption on blood pressure are well recognised. The higher the salt intake, the higher the risk of hypertension. According to the World Health Organization, healthy adults should consume less than 5 grams of salt per day. However, according to the PHS 2020-22, local persons aged 15 to 84 consumed a daily average of 8.4g salt. The spokesman reminded members of the public to keep the total salt intake below 5g per day. Meanwhile, iodised salt instead of ordinary table salt is recommended so as to increase iodine intake and maintain adequate iodine nutrition.

Apart from paying attention to salt intake, people should also engage in at least 150 to 300 minutes of physical activities of moderate intensity (such as brisk walking) or 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous physical activities (such as jogging) every week as regular exercise can bring about numerous

health benefits, including reducing blood pressure.

To contain the prevalence of raised blood pressure, the Government will continue organising health promotional campaigns to enhance public awareness about the importance of healthy living and regular measurement of blood pressure. For persons aged 45 or above, the risk of hypertension is exponentially rising and early detection of hypertension will be critical for maintaining blood pressure within a normal range. The Government is proactively inviting the public who have no known medical history of hypertension to start screening by their family doctors or at the District Health Centre (DHC)/DHC Express. The implementation of Chronic Disease Co-Care Pilot Scheme has provided subsidised services to support long-term care in the community. The Government will also continue to closely collaborate with community partners to foster a health-enhancing environment and drive better self-care for better control of blood pressure subject to individual risk.

More information on hypertension is available on the DH's thematic page at www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/25/35390.html.

Public urged to reduce excessive salt intake in support of World Hypertension Day

The following is issued on behalf of the Committee on Reduction of Salt and Sugar in Food:

In support of World Hypertension Day, held annually on May 17, the Committee on Reduction of Salt and Sugar in Food today (May 17) urged the public to avoid excessive salt intake so as to lower the risk of developing hypertension.

Excessive dietary salt (sodium) intake is a major cause of hypertension. Dubbed "the silent killer", hypertension that does not receive early treatment can lead to serious diseases such as heart disease, stroke and kidney failure, etc. According to the Report of Population Health Survey (PHS) 2020-2022 published by the Department of Health, local persons aged 15 to 84 had an average daily salt intake of 8.4 grams (about 3 400 milligrams of sodium), exceeding the daily limit as recommended by the World Health Organization by over 70 per cent. In addition, one in every four persons (29.5 per cent) among the said age group had hypertension. Among those with hypertension, more than 40 per cent were not aware of having hypertension until attending the PHS health examination.

Reducing one's salt intake helps lower the risk of developing hypertension, cardiovascular disease and stroke. According to studies conducted by the Centre for Food Safety, nearly 70 per cent of sodium intake by local adults comes from condiments and sauces, soup, and processed and cured meat. Reducing the amount of salt intake is not difficult. By gradually cutting back on sodium in one's daily diet, taste buds will become accustomed to the milder taste. Some feasible ways to reduce salt intake are as follows:

- When dining out, request sauces to be served separately from the food, choose a reduced salt option, or dishes with no or less sauce;
- Reduce the consumption of processed foods such as sausage, ham and bacon etc;
- Use fresh foods when cooking at home with natural spices or fruits, such as ginger, green onion, garlic, herbs, chili, turmeric, black pepper, lemon juice, etc as natural seasonings to enhance the flavour of dishes and reduce sodium intake;
- When buying prepackaged food products, check for the sodium content on the food nutrition labels and choose less salt (sodium) foods. For example, the sodium content of tuna in mineral water is less than that of tuna in brine or seasoned tuna

More information on salt and sugar reduction is available on the [Facebook page of Hong Kong's Action on Salt and Sugar Reduction](#).

Red flags hoisted at some beaches

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (May 17) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Stanley Main Beach, Shek O Beach and Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island; and Silverstrand Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Speech by SCST at Hong Kong Night reception in 77th Cannes Film Festival (English only) (with photo)

Following are the welcome remarks by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, at the Hong Kong Night reception in the 77th Cannes Film Festival yesterday (May 16, Cannes time):

Hello, everyone! Welcome to our Hong Kong Night reception. It's my great pleasure to meet all of you here in Cannes.

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has been actively promoting arts and culture. Since 2005, the Government has been injecting about HK\$3 billion into our Film Development Fund, a fund designated to support our film industry.

We treasure our overseas partners and have strengthened our participation in international film festivals to extend our market coverage and enhance exchanges. By leading delegations of some of the most exceptional and emerging directors, producers and actors from Hong Kong, like those attending here tonight, we hope to increase the exposure of Hong Kong cinema in a proactive approach, fostering more cultural exchanges among film talents across national borders and various cultures.

To reinforce Hong Kong as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange, we launched the Hong Kong-Asian Film Collaboration Funding Scheme last year to support collaboration between the film industries of Hong Kong and Asian countries. The response was overwhelming. We hence extended the funding scheme to cover Europe as the Hong Kong-Europe-Asian Film Collaboration Funding Scheme, to welcome projects from Europe and Asia.

Most important of all, we are thrilled to see many Chinese language films selected in Cannes this year. Hong Kong film, "Twilight of the Warriors: Walled In", is chosen for the Midnight Screenings section, and will be screened right after this reception. We are honoured to have the director and cast joining us tonight. With the strong tradition of Hong Kong cinema, a 4K restoration of "Shanghai Blues", directed by esteemed filmmaker Tsui Hark, is selected for Cannes Classics section. Renowned Hong Kong director Peter Chan's mainland production "She's Got No Name" will be presented under Out Of Competition section towards the end of the Festival.

Last but not least, tonight, we are not just celebrating Hong Kong cinema, but also aiming to forge new connections among all of us at this world's most prestigious film event. So let us enjoy the party. Thank you.



[Hong Kong and Peru substantially conclude free trade agreement negotiations \(with photos\)](#)

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, today (May 16, Arequipa time) met with the Minister of Foreign Trade and Tourism of Peru, Ms Elizabeth Galdo Marín, and jointly announced the substantial conclusion of negotiations of the free trade agreement (FTA) between Hong Kong and Peru on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Ministers Responsible for Trade Meeting in Arequipa, Peru.

"The negotiations, which began in 2023, cover trade in goods, trade in services (including e-commerce), investment and other related areas. I am pleased to note that our shared objectives in achieving a high-quality and comprehensive bilateral FTA are met," Mr Yau said.

"Peru is Hong Kong's important trading partner in Latin America. The FTA will enhance the trade and investment ties between the two sides, provide Hong Kong products, enterprises and investors with legal certainty and better access to the Peruvian market, and bring mutual benefits to our two economies," he added.

The two sides aim to finish the few remaining issues and the respective internal procedures with a view to signing the FTA within this year. Details of the agreement will then be announced.

In 2023, Peru ranked fifth among Hong Kong's merchandise trading partners in Latin America. The total merchandise trade between Hong Kong and Peru amounted to HK\$5,231 million in 2023 and grew at an average annual rate of four per cent from 2019 to 2023.

Hong Kong has so far signed eight FTAs with 20 economies, including the Mainland of China, New Zealand, the member states of the European Free Trade Association (i.e. Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland), Chile, Macao, the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (i.e.

Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam), Georgia and Australia. All FTAs have entered into force.

In addition to the FTA with Peru, Hong Kong will continue to actively expand economic and trade network, such as seeking early accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and exploring FTAs or investment agreements with other potential partners in the Middle East and other regions along the Belt and Road.

