



PREFACE

Since salt became widely accessible, the correlation between salt intake and blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, osteoporosis, and certain cancers has been evidenced. Korea has been involved in the Intersalt study, which is the first large international study to analyze amount of sodium excretion in 24-hour urine in relation to blood pressure. However, it is very surprising that few epidemiologic and clinical studies on sodium intake and related complications have been conducted and reported during the last 50 years in Korea. The World Health Organization continuously emphasizes the importance of establishing national strategies to reduce salt intake because the main causes of mortality and morbidity worldwide have shifted from communicable diseases to chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and chronic kidney disease, all related in one way or another with high salt intake. Finland is one example of a national success in salt intake reduction along with the improvement of blood pressure and mortality of coronary heart disease and stroke.

The National Academy of Medicine of Korea, the Research Institute of Salt and Health, the Salt Reduction Center, and associated nephrologists, cardiologists, and nutritionists discussed the status of salt intake and its complications in 2011 and 2012 and planned action strategies to reduce the national salt intake. As one of the actions, research projects funded by Ministry of Food and Drug Safety were launched in 2013.

The National Academy of Medicine of Korea translated the 'Institute of Medicine Report and Strategies to Reduce Sodium Intake in the United States.' The Research Institute of Salt and Health surveyed the status of salt intake estimated by 24-hour urine samples in a district of Seoul and another Korean city, organized campaigns to increase awareness of the complications of high salt intake, and announced the importance of low salt intake via nationwide well-known broadcasts and newspapers. The first part of this supplement is the result of the activities organized by the National Academy of Medicine of Korea, the Research Institute of Salt and Health, and research funded by the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety. The second part of this supplement is consisted of the role of hemeoxygenase-1 (HO-1) and bilirubin, which is a product of HO-1, in the kidney. Especially, bilirubin is not only a wasting product from heme but also has cytoprotective roles in diabetes, diabetic complications, cardiovascular and renal systems. Authors expand the pathophysiologic mechanisms of HO-1 and bilirubin.

As a Guest Editor of this Supplement, I appreciate the support of the Korean Academy of Medical Sciences and the National Academy of Medicine of Korea that have promoted the success of this publication. Additionally, I would like to express my gratitude to the authors and reviewers who spent their valuable time giving support to research regarding the salt intake, as well as the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety.

I hope this publication will be helpful to stimulate and accelerate the movement to promote lower salt intake in the Korean society to improve the health status of the general population.

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