

World Health Day

Each year, World Health Day celebrates the formation of the World Health Organization. In 2013, the theme is hypertension, and on April 4th there will be a media release from the World Health Organization (<http://www.who.int/world-healthday/en/>). The WHO intends to focus attention on “the causes and consequences of hypertension, the need for people to have healthy behaviours to prevent hypertension, the need for regular blood pressure checks, and the need for governments to create healthy environments that would assist in preventing hypertension.”

Increased blood pressure is recognized by the WHO as the leading risk for death and disability worldwide. An estimated 9.4 million deaths annually and 7% of all disability are caused by increased blood pressure. The World Hypertension League supports the efforts of the WHO to bring attention to hypertension and requests national hypertension organizations and experts utilize the World Health Day to advocate for actions to prevent and control hypertension. In addition, the World Hypertension League through its national member leagues and societies promote public awareness of hypertension through World Hypertension Day, annually, on May 17th.

The World Hypertension League reminds all that:

- Hypertension is largely preventable but is a constant threat to wellbeing.
 - Hypertension is largely caused by unhealthy eating (especially high dietary salt), physical inactivity, obesity, and excessive alcohol intake.

- There are effective healthy public policies that if implemented could largely prevent hypertension from occurring.
 - A lack of public policies to support healthy lifestyles is a major threat to the wellbeing of the global population.
 - Most important is for countries and communities to have an effective strategy to reduce dietary salt.
- Hypertension can be inexpensively and easily detected.
 - Communities need programs for all adults to have regular blood pressure assessments
- Effective lifestyle and drug treatments are available that could control hypertension in nearly all.
 - All countries need to strive to make healthy foods and affordable antihypertensive drugs accessible to all.

Utilize World Health Day to reduce the burden of hypertension through optimized detection and management in individuals, through training in best hypertension prevention and control practices to health care providers, by developing community and work place hypertension programs, and, most importantly, by ensuring healthy public policies are implemented to create healthy environments for all to live and work in.

Visit the World Hypertension League website for more information. <http://www.worldhypertensionleague.org/>

*Liu Lisheng**, *Norm Campbell†*, *Arun Chockalingam‡*,
 World Hypertension League
 Beijing, China; Calgary, Canada; and Burnaby, Canada

*President, World Hypertension League, Fu Wai Hospital, Beijing, China; †President Elect, World Hypertension League, Department of Medicine, University of Calgary, Calgary, Canada; ‡Secretary General, World Hypertension League, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, Canada.

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