

Better Salt for the Heart – Potassium-Enriched Salt Project

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Abstract

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), particularly cardiovascular disease, are the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in Fiji. Excess sodium intake, mainly from salt, and inadequate potassium consumption are key modifiable drivers of hypertension. In 2025, the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended replacing regular salt use with potassium-enriched salt to reduce blood pressure and cardiovascular diseases. In Fiji, using potassium-enriched salt instead of regular salt could prevent hundreds of deaths, heart attacks and strokes every year. However, the availability of healthier potassium-enriched salt in Fiji supermarkets is unknown. As part of a multi-year initiative, we evaluated the availability, pricing and placement of potassium-enriched salt in relation to other salts to identify opportunities to improve uptake.

A cross-sectional survey of 32 supermarkets in Fiji's Central Division was conducted from October to November, 2025. Only one potassium-enriched salt product was identified and stocked in 9 supermarkets, priced approximately 2-4 times higher per gram (FJD 2.50–3.00 for 600g) compared to regular salt and was often placed below eye level with limited stock, reducing visibility. The retail environment was dominated by common iodised salt. These findings highlight a significant gap between global evidence and local access.

Improving the availability and affordability of potassium-enriched salt in Fiji represents a clear opportunity to strengthen national hypertension prevention efforts. Coordinated action to drive consumer awareness and demand, policy and market-based interventions is needed to translate global evidence into population-level impact in Fiji.

Keywords

Sodium reduction, potassium-enriched salt, public health nutrition, hypertension, cardiovascular disease.