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## Letter to the Editor/Correspondance

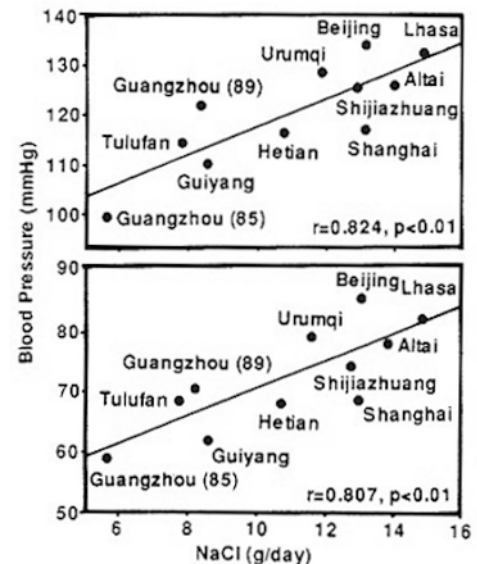
### Effect of Fast Food on Blood Pressure in China

To the Editor:

I read with interest the recent report that inter-regional cardiac outcome disparities throughout Ontario were partially explained by fast-food service intensity.<sup>1</sup> Such an association has also been demonstrated in China, especially with regard to hypertension.<sup>2,3</sup>

Zhou et al.<sup>3</sup> showed a close relation between daily urinary sodium excretion and blood pressure in mainland China (Figure 1). In general, blood pressure and urinary sodium excretion as a measure of sodium intake tended to be higher in northern China, e.g., Beijing (formerly called Peking), and Shijiazhuang than in southern China, e.g., Guangzhou (formerly called Canton). Of note was the observation that, in Guangzhou, a 1989 study showed a gradual rise of blood pressure as compared with a 1985 study, associated with a corresponding increase in urinary sodium excretion. The increase in sodium intake between these two surveys coincided with the rise in the number of American fast food restaurants, such as McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken, that had opened in Guangzhou during that period.<sup>2,4,5</sup> Association does not ensure causality, but the evidence is striking enough to merit further study.

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**Figure 1.** Close relation between daily urinary sodium excretion (X-axis) and systolic (top) and diastolic (bottom) blood pressures (Y-axis) in mainland China. The numbers in parentheses after the city of Guangzhou denote the different years, i.e., 1985 and 1989. (From Ref. 2).

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