

nutrition standards and most effective approaches to front-of-pack labelling.

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**Competing interests:** None declared.

#### REFERENCES

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#### [Dr. Freedhoff responds:]

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada's Health Check program was recently examined in a news piece in *CMAJ*.<sup>1</sup> Although it is true that the nutrient criteria for this program have recently been revised,<sup>2</sup> they still permit products to contain tremendous amounts of sodium and sugar.

Health Check's criteria currently allow individual products to contain between 21% and 57% of the maximal daily sodium intake recommended by Health Canada and between 32% and 87% of that recommended by Blood Pressure Canada.<sup>3</sup> These allowances reflect tremendous hypocrisy, especially given that in 2007 the Heart and Stroke Foundation, along with Blood Pressure Canada, the Canadian Hypertension Education Program, the Canadian Hypertension Society and the Société Québécoise d'Hypertension Artérielle, urged Canadians to avoid foods containing more than 10% of the maximal daily recommended amount of sodium.<sup>4</sup>

Using a diet made up entirely of items endorsed by the Health Check program, I found that the program

allows people to easily consume more than 4000 mg of sodium and 190 g of sugar daily, with sugar accounting for over 30% of total calories (calculations available at [www.cmaj.ca/cgi/eleletters/178/4/386#18544](http://www.cmaj.ca/cgi/eleletters/178/4/386#18544)). These values are nearly double the maximal sodium intake recommended by Health Canada, nearly triple the maximal sodium intake recommended by Blood Pressure Canada and triple the World Health Organization's recommended maximal daily sugar allowance.<sup>5</sup>

It would be tragic if we were blinded by the Heart and Stroke Foundation's reputation and adopted Health Check as Canada's national front-of-package labelling program, because Health Check's minimalist and lax nutritional criteria sorely fail to guide Canadians to healthier choices. It is time for Canadians to demand that national policies and recommendations be grounded in evidence.

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**Competing interests:** None declared.

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5. World Health Organization. *Diet, nutrition and the prevention of chronic diseases: report of a joint WHO/FAO expert consultation*. WHO Tech Rep Ser no 916. Geneva: The Organization; 2003.

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## Corrections

An article in The Left Atrium in the Feb. 26 issue about Bolivian travelling doctors contained an error and an omission.<sup>1</sup> The correct spelling of the term for these individuals is *medicos viajeros Bolivianos*. In addition, the coauthor of this article was Andrew G. Malleon MBBS, Department of Psychiatry (retired), University Health Network, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ont. *CMAJ* apologizes for this error and any inconvenience it may have caused.

#### REFERENCE

1. Stewart D. *Medicos viajeros Bolivianos*. *CMAJ* 2008;178:602.

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A Dispatch from the Medical Front in the March 11 issue should have identified Tamale as being located in Ghana. Because of an editing error, it was identified as being in Uganda.<sup>1</sup>

#### REFERENCE

1. Lin, Daren. Soup truck. *CMAJ* 2008;178:673.

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