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# Fact Sheet

**Improving treatments for acute intracerebral haemorrhage strokes (INTERACT3)** – March 2022

The George Institute for Global Health

## Facts:

- Stroke is the 2nd leading cause of death and 3rd leading cause of disability worldwide.
- ICH stroke accounts for up to half of all strokes in low- to middle-income countries, and at least one-third of patients die within one month after onset.
- Acute hypertension occurs among almost all patients who experience an ICH and strongly predicts a bad outcome – death or survival with disability.

## Project cycle:

*2017 – 2023*

## Partners:

*The George Institute for Global Health*
*The West China Hospital, China*

## Supporters:

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*The West China Hospital Outstanding Discipline Development 1-3-5 Program, China*
*The National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia (NHMRC), Australia*
*Sichuan Credit Pharmaceutical CO., LTD, China*
*Takeda (China) International Trading Co., Ltd., China*

## Background:

- Acute stroke due to spontaneous bleeding in the brain, called intracerebral haemorrhage (ICH), is the most severe and least treatable type of stroke.
- Despite many requiring life-saving surgery, intensive care and other treatments, there is uncertainty about how best to organise the management of ICH patients.
- Rates of ICH are particularly high in low- and middle-income countries, largely due to the high prevalence of hypertension and other risk factors.
- Given the strong relationship between elevated blood pressure (BP) and serious outcomes from stroke (ICH), rapidly lowering BP may improve treatment and recovery.

## Aims:

- To determine whether new treatment strategies to control BP, sugar levels and fever early, coupled with reversing any blood thinners, can improve ICH survival without serious disability.

## Methods:

- This study uses a step-wedged, cluster-randomised controlled design. Hospitals are randomised between the control 'usual care' and the proposed trial package of care.
- The study aims to enrol 8,360 patients across 110 hospitals in nine low- and middle-income countries and one high-income country.
- This study will include a broad range of patients, including those with large ICH and/or require early neurosurgery who have often been excluded from previous research studies.
- The study also includes interviews with participating health professionals to gain insights into the barriers and facilitators to change processes of care introduced by the care bundle.

## Impact:

- This is the largest research project to ever evaluate treatments for ICH and will involve a significant number of hospitals in China and around the world where there is a heavy burden of stroke.
- It will clarify whether managing abnormal physiological variables and rapid correction of blood thinners can improve stroke recovery.
- The protocols used for the package of care can be readily adopted in hospitals worldwide.
- Research learnings will inform and transform global stroke treatment strategies.


**Contact:**
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