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Assessment of knowledge and attitudes of hypertensives regarding aetiology of hypertension

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation was carried out on 90 hypertensives, who were attending cardiac clinic of BHU Hospital of Varanasi City. The main objectives of the study were to assess prevalent risk factors of hypertension and ranking of knowledge and attitudes of hypertensives. Interview schedule was used for data collection. Findings of the study indicated that 60 per cent of the hypertensive had family history of hypertension. Approximately 11 per cent of the respondents were suffering from acute stress and 55 per cent were suffering from mild stress. A majority (approx. 66%) of the hypertensives, were observed to be physically active and the similar percentage were not addicted of smoking and drinking. Majority of the hypertensives (66%) were vegetarian in food habit. Twenty per cent of the hypertensives did not follow salt restriction and about 33 per cent of the respondents were commonly using saturated fat in their daily diet. Findings depicted that approximately 46 per cent of the hypertensives had inadequate knowledge regarding etiology of hypertension followed by those who did not know at all (about 28%) and by those who were having adequate knowledge (26%) regarding the same. Fifty per cent of the respondents had opinion that stress condition was the major risk factor for hypertension whereas 60 per cent respondent's attitude was that smoking and drinking aggravates high blood pressure.

Key words : Hypertensives, Assessment, Risk factors, Knowledge level, Attitude ranking

INTRODUCTION

The present study was conducted to assess the knowledge and attitudes of hypertensive patients regarding aetiology of hypertension. Hypertension is regarded as one of the serious public health problems in India. The prevalence of hypertension in India has been reported as 50.9 and 69.9 per 1,000 in males and females, respectively in the urban population, and 35.3 and 35.9 per 1,000 in males and females, respectively in rural population.

Hypertension is considered as one of the major risk-factors for most forms of cardio-vascular disease. It is a condition which has its own risk factors. A WHO scientific group has reviewed the risk factor for essential hypertension. These may be classified as:

- Non- modifiable risk factors – age and genetic factors.
- Modifiable risk factors : Obesity, salt intake, saturated fat, alcohol, physical activity, environmental stress and other factors.

Park and Park (1989) stated that only 50% of the hypertensive subjects in the general population of most developed countries were aware of the condition, only 50% of those were aware of the problem being treated and only about 50% of those treated were considered adequately treated. If this was the situation in countries with highly developed medical services, in developing countries, the number treated could be for less.

The 'World Hypertension League' (1989) reported that obesity control has a definite potential for the prevention of hypertension.

The League has reported that salt restriction generally results in an additional decrease in blood pressure in the presence of most antihypertensive drugs. It was also observed that weight loss caused salt sensitive individuals to become less salt sensitive.

There is a positive correlation between physical activity and blood pressure. The world Hypertension League (1991) has presented the view that regular

vigorous exercise is associated with a reduced risk for hypertension.

Abundant studies on several facts related with hypertension have been done by many scientific groups and nutrition workers. Further, no emphasis has been given by them on the present study which is of significant importance, thus study seems to be important.

The present study was undertaken with keeping in view the objectives as hereunder : to assess prevailing risk factors for hypertension among the respondents, to assess knowledge of hypertensives regarding aetiology of hypertension and to assess attitudes of hypertensives regarding risk factors for hypertension.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To fulfill the objectives of the present study, 90 hypertensives were selected at random from out of those who were regularly attending Cardiac clinic of Banaras Hindu University, Hospital of Varanasi City. Necessary data were collected by using interview schedule developed for the purpose. The data obtained were processed and analyzed for the assessment of prevalence of risk factors among the respondents as well as for the knowledge and attitude level of hypertensives regarding aetiology of hypertension.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Prevalence of risk factors for hypertension including family history, stress condition, physical activity, salt intake etc. was identified among the respondents.

Findings presented in Table 1 clearly reveal that 60 per cent of the hypertensives had family history of high blood pressure. Among the study subject 11 per cent were suffering from acute stress and 55.55 per cent were victims of mild stress. As per doctor’s advice, only 65.55 per cent hypertnsives were doing physical exercise. Smoking and drinking habit was prevalent among 33.33 per cent hypertensive patients. A majority (66.66) of the respondents were vegetarian in food habit. Twenty per cent of the hypertensives did not follow salt restriction at all, whereas rest were following mild (64.44%) to severe (5.55%) salt restriction. Among the respondents 33.33 per cent were commonly using saturated fat in their daily diet.

Findings presented in Table 2 clearly reveal that approximately one fourth of the respondents were having adequate knowledge regarding the risk factors of hypertension whereas approximately 46 per cent were having inadequate knowledge at all (21.77%) followed by those having no knowledge.

The data presented in Table 3 depict that

Table 1 : Prevalence of Risk factors for hypertension among the respondents

Sr. No.	Risk factors	Prevalence
1.	Family history	Frequency (%) of respondents
	Maternal	20 (22.22)
	Paternal	24 (26.66)
	Both	10 (11.11)
	None	36 (40.00)
2.	Stress condition	
	Acute	10 (11.11)
	Mild	50 (55.55)
	No stress	30 (33.33)
3.	Physical exercise	
	Yes	59 (65.55)
4.	No	31 (34.44)
	Smoking and drinking	
5.	Yes	30 (33.33)
	No	60 (66.66)
6.	Food habit	
	Vegetarian	60 (66.66)
	Non- vegetarian	30 (33.33)
7.	Salt intake	
	No restriction	18 (20.00)
	Mild restriction	58 (64.44)
	Moderate restriction	09 (10.00)
	Severe restriction	05 (05.55)
7.	Edible oils / fats	
	Saturated fats	30 (33.33)
	Unsaturated fats	60 (66.66)

approximately 39 per cent of the hypertensives had opinion that risk factors like family history, stress condition, physical activity, smoking or drinking, obesity etc. were responsible for the incidence of hypertension. Approximately 39 per cent of the respondents were having undecided attitude followed by 29.72 per cent hypertensives with unfavorable attitude.

Table 2 : Distribution of hypertensives according to their knowledge regarding aetiology of hypertension

Sr. No.	Etiology of hypertension	Frequency (%) of hypertensives			Total
		Knowledge			
		Adequate	Inadequate	Not known	
1.	Family history	20 (22.22)	40 (44.44)	30 (33.33)	90
2.	Stress condition	12 (13.33)	52(57.77)	26 (28.88)	90
3.	Physical activity	11(12.22)	50 (55.55)	29 (32.22)	90
4.	Smoking or drinking	22 (24.44)	47 (52.22)	21(23.33)	90
5.	food habit	30 (33.33)	50 (55.55)	10 (11.11)	90
6	Salt intake	42 (46.66)	36(40.00)	12 (13.33)	90
7.	Saturated fat	9(10.00)	36 (40.00)	45 (50.00)	90
8.	Obesity	45 (50.00)	18 (20.00)	27 (30.00)	90
	Total	23.87 (26.52)	41.12 (45.68)	25.00 (27.77)	90 (100)

Table 3 : Attitude ranking of hypertensive patients regarding risk factors for hypertension

Sr. No.	Risk factors	Frequency (%) of Hypertensive			Total
		Attitude			
		Favourable	Unfavorable	Undecided	
1.	Family history	25 (38.88)	28 (31.11)	27 (30.00)	90
2.	Stress condition	45 (50.00)	18 (20.00)	27 (30.00)	90
3.	Physical activity	25 (27.77)	45 (50.00)	20 (22.22)	90
4.	Smoking or drinking	54 (60.00)	9 (10.00)	27 (30.00)	90
5.	Food habit	33 (36.66)	12 (13.33)	45 (50.00)	90
6	Salt intake	35 (38.88)	45 (50.00)	10 (11.11)	90
7.	Saturated fat	18 (20.00)	32 (35.00)	40 (44.44)	90
8.	Obesity	38 (42.22)	25 (27.77)	27 (30.00)	90
	Total	39.37 (39.30)	21.12 (29.72)	27.87 (38.97)	90 (100)

Conclusion:

It may be concluded that patients with adequate knowledge and favourable attitudes follow proper preventive and control strategies and the rest did not, thus it can be said that the difference in practices may be certainly due to the knowledge gap and attitude variations existing among study subjects.

Recommendation:

Those persons who have a family history of hypertension, hold stressful jobs, are obese, or already have one risk factor- smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol level- should undergo regular checks from the age of 40.

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