Research abstract

Arterial hypertension in Saudi Arabia

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A cross-sectional population-based survey employing a cluster sampling method and household visits by trained health teams investigated hypertension prevalence in Saudi Arabia among 13 700 individuals of both sexes in all age groups. The World Health Organization (WHO) definition of hypertension of blood pressure ≥ 160/95 mmHg was used; it was found that 9.1% and 8.7% of the total sample investigated were systolic and diastolic hypertensives, respectively. However, 12.4% and 7.9% of children younger than 18 years were systolic and diastolic hypertensive. Among adults aged 18 years and above, 5.3% were systolic and 7.3% were diastolic hypertensives; 87.5% of systolic and 79.4% of diastolic hypertensives were aged 40 years and over. Females had statistically significant elevated systolic hypertension compared with males ($P < 0.01$). However, if blood pressure ≥ 140/90 mmHg is used as a criterion for hypertension definition, the prevalence among the latter age groups would be 20.4% for systolic and 25.9% for diastolic hypertension. The prevalence of isolated systolic hypertension (ISH), isolated diastolic hypertension (IDH) and systolic diastolic hypertension (SDH) among adults above 18 years was 1.8%, 3.8% and 3.5% respectively. ISH was higher among females compared with males (2% vs 1.4%), while IDH was higher among males than females (4.4% vs 3.4%). There is a need for tracking childhood hypertension, which could provide long-term analysis for risk of adult hypertension.

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