

ABSTRACT

Background:

Hypertension is a growing health problem in Uganda and Africa as a whole. The study was conducted to determine the prevalence and identify factors associated with hypertension among the adult patients in Arua regional referral hospital.

Methodology: The study used facility based cross sectional design and was in the months of August and September. Participants from the age of 18 years and older were sampled in the study. A standardized questionnaire was administered; blood pressure and anthropometric measurements were taken and recorded. The questionnaire collected data on demographic characteristics, life style and health related factors. Hypertension was defined as a persistent raised blood pressure of systolic and diastolic pressure values of greater than or equal to 140/90mmhg. The frequency and Odd ratios were used to report results in the study.

Results: The sample size was determined using Croschans formula; a total number of 300 participants were involved in the study. A percentage of 3.3% of the participants refused to complete the study, giving a response rate of 96.7% in the study. The prevalence of hypertension was found at 35.2% among the adults which is higher than the Uganda's national prevalence of 26.4% reported in 2015. Prevalence also increases with age. The main factor implicated in the development of hypertension among the participants was adoption of western lifestyles, such as diet, physical inactivity, increased psychosocial stress to family history of hypertension. The prevalence of hypertension was higher in females than in their counter parts. This may be due to high level of obesity and physical inactivity, common in them and 12.4% of the participants had undiagnosed hypertension. A higher percentage on treatment had their blood pressure poorly controlled and was at risk of complications of hypertension. There was poor compliance to measures such as salt intake reduction, losing weight and physical activity.

Conclusion: The prevalence of hypertension among the adults at Arua regional referral hospital is relatively high and the finding confirms the growing concern about hypertension as a public health problem in Uganda. More studies should however be carried to determine the distribution and determinants of hypertension in other parts of the country.

In light of high rate of unawareness, the ministry of health should set up a program for health education, promotion and treatment of hypertension in Uganda. Unless addressed, the morbidity and mortality from hypertension will continue to increase