

ABSTRACT

Background: Hypertension is a driver of the cardiovascular disease epidemic with 16.5 % of all global deaths attributable to high blood pressure. Hypertension is reported to result in array of cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), namely, heart disease and stroke and kidney failure, premature mortality, and disability.

Objective: The purpose of this study was to assess the factors contributing to the burden of hypertension among adults at Mityana general hospital, Mityana district - central Uganda

Method: This study adopted a cross-sectional comparative design to study, to study hypertensive patients at Mityana general hospital. Mityana general hospital was sampled. At the hypertension clinic, consecutive sampling was used to sample the hypertensive patients. At the outpatient department, simple random sampling was used to sample the patients. Structured interviews and BP measurement were the data collection methods. The study used structured questionnaires and a digital BP machine as the data collection tools. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software Version 20.0

Results: The findings showed that the majority of the cases (n = 163, 90%) had grade 1 hypertension (140 – 159 mmHg), while more than three quarters of the controls (n = 145, 80.1%) had optimal blood pressure (<120mmHg). Of all the dietary characteristics, only one had a statistically significant relationship with the blood pressure. This was the number of meals usually had in a day (X² = 11.780, p = 0.008). Five individual characteristics had a significant relationship with the blood pressure of patients at Mityana hospital. These characteristics included; being a current smoker (X² = 6.004, p = 0.014), consumption of energy drinks (X² = 5.030, p = 0.025), duration of sleep at night (X² = 10.472, P = 0.033), current age (in years) (X² = 13.438, p = 0.004), and religious denomination (X² = 29.021, p = 0.000).

Conclusion: Hypertension is a still burden among patients at Mityana hospital. 9 out of every 10 of them have grade 1 hypertension despite being on treatment. That level of blood pressure among those patients is determined majorly by individual characteristics including those are to do with lifestyle and to a small extent by dietary characteristics.

Recommendations: the following recommendations were suggested; service providers at Mityana hospital hypertension clinic should, within their routine health education curricular include topics to do with meal frequency, most importantly, patients should be cautioned against having more than three meals in a single day. The same should also be done about smoking and consumption of energy drinks. Patients on antihypertensive medication should be urged to withdraw from the consumption of energy drinks and refrain from smoking if the blood pressure are to normalize. Patients on antihypertensive medication are also urged to ensure that they have an adequate night's sleep on a daily basis; not less than 5 hours per night, in order to prevent having persistent grade 1 hypertension. Patients on antihypertensive medication aged above 40 years are cautioned to be more vigilant with their lifestyle habits, especially meal frequency, duration of sleep and energy drink consumption, since at that age, they are more prone to blood pressure increment effects of those life style habits.