Abstract 63

Hypertension among the Saudi Elderly

Prof. Sulaiman AlShammari , MD
Department of Family & Community Medicine, College of Medicine King Saud University, Saudi Arabia

Key words : hypertension , Saudi , elderly

Background: Hypertension is well known high cardiovascular risk factor .But it is not studied among the Saudi elderly.

Objectives: To find out how prevalent hypertension among the Saudi elderly, to evaluate how far the current health care meets the present and future needs and to propose the necessary recommendations to ensure delivery of suitable health care for them.

Method: A cluster sampling technique of household was used to select the elderly in the catchment areas of primary health care centers nationwide. The subjects' physical, mental, social and environmental health status were assessed in a household visit during which a structured data form was completed by trained research team. Blood, stool and urine specimen were collected for laboratory investigations. Other items of information in the data form included their sociodemographic characteristics, Activity of Daily Living and radiological investigations.

Results: Data analysis of 2950 elderly showed hypertension was a major health problem among the elderly. Only 11% of the elderly were normotensive and 38.3% were classified as prehypertensive. The other 50% were hypertensive and about 20% had isolated hypertension. The rate of hypertension increased with age and it was more among female. About 80.5% of the diagnosed elderly were on antihypertensive medications, and 69.6% of them were not controlled.

Conclusions: A national cost-effective programme for the care of elderly is necessary. The present widespread primary health care centres can be upgraded to coordinate the proposed services for the elderly through the practice of Age-friendly Community-based Centers.The Saudi society for management of hypertension can play a major role in training and scientific support.