Event Abstract

Awareness of Hypertensive Patients about Risk Factors, and Complications of Hypertension in Primary Health Care Centers in Tripoli 2013

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Background: Hypertension is an important public health challenge worldwide because of its high prevalence and concomitant increase in risk of disease. It is the most important modifiable, and powerful risk factor for cardiovascular, cerebrovascular and renal disease. Hypertension was identified as the leading global risk factor for mortality and as the third leading risk factor for disease burden. Significant numbers of individuals with hypertension are unaware of their condition and, among those with diagnosed hypertension, treatment is frequently inadequate. Adequate control of blood pressure is of enormous public health importance.

Aims: to identify the demographic and the clinical characteristics, and to estimate the risk factors among hypertensive patients on follow up at primary health care centers in Tripoli, to estimate their awareness level about hypertension; including their knowledge about possible risk factors, complications, and misconceptions, and to estimate the percent of blood pressure control among those on treatment.

Methods: In this cross sectional study, we enrolled 300 patients with a diagnosis of Essential/ Primary Hypertension, were at follow up at primary health care centres in Tripoli, from the beginning of January till the end of June 2013, the following data; Baseline demographic/Clinical characteristic, Knowledge of hypertensive patients about (possible causes/risk factors, and complications of primary hypertension), Drugs and Follow up, and Misconception about hypertension were collected.

Results: The results revealed that most of the patients 72.7% were with the sedentary physical activity level, 27.3% with moderate physical activity level, and no high physical activity level, the most of the patients 78.7% were overweight/obese, 45% were overweight, obese patients were 33.7%, while only 21.3% were within the normal weight, for smoking 19.7% still current smoking, and 14.7% were former smoking, blood pressure were uncontrolled in 47.7%, for knowledge about possible causes/risk factors; 17.7% were did not know any cause of hypertension, while 82.3% of the patients knew some causes of hypertension; 69.3% of the patients knew only one possible cause of HPN, 9.1% knew two possible causes of HPN, and 4% knew three or more possible causes of HPN, the most known possible cause/risk factor was the Emotional/Environmental cause knew by 65.4% of patients, followed by Hereditary 14.1%, then Obesity 13.75%, and lastly Excessive salt intake 6.3%, for knowledge about complications of HPN, the most of patients 57.7% were unaware of any of the Complications, while 33.2% were aware of one complication, 6.4% were aware of two causes, and only 2.6% were aware of three or more complications of HPN, the CVS complications were the more famous complications 23.6%, followed by CNS complications 16.6%, renal complications 10.3%, and 5.9% of the eye complications, for the misconception about HPN, the most of patients 57.7% were unaware of any of the Complications, while 33.2% were aware of one complication, 6.4% were aware of two causes, and only 2.6% were aware of three or more complications of HPN, the CVS complications were the more famous complications 23.6%, followed by CNS complications 16.6%, renal complications 10.3%, and 5.9% of the eye complications, for the misconception about HPN, only 41.3% didn't believe that primary HPN can be treated, and 40.3% of the patients that believed that antihypertensive drugs should be continued even BP was controlled.
Conclusions: Smoking, overweight/obesity, and lack of physical activity are modifiable risk factors of hypertension that present with relatively high percent in our study. Considerable number of the patients with uncontrolled hypertension. Many patients believe that emotional stress is an important etiological factor for hypertension and are ignorant of other contributing factors which can be corrected, such as excessive salt intake and obesity. Most of the patients didn't know any complication of hypertension, while CVS, and CNS complications were the most known. There are relatively high percent of misconceptions about hypertension represented as wrongly believes that primary hypertension can be cured, and that drugs can be stopped once control is achieved. So it's clear the patients do not have a comprehensive understanding about hypertension, as there are low knowledge, in addition to wrong beliefs.

Keywords: Libya, hypertension, risk factors and complication.


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