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PROPORTION OF PATIENTS WITH UNCONTROLLED HYPERTENSION AND ITS ASSOCIATED FACTORS AMONG MEDICAL CLINIC ATTENDEES IN TEACHING HOSPITAL KALUTARA

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Background: Hypertension is a major risk factor for cardiovascular diseases and mortality. However, many hypertensive patients have uncontrolled hypertension. Understanding the factors associated with uncontrolled hypertension may help in the management of hypertensive patients.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out at the medical clinics of Teaching Hospital Kalutara. The study period was from February – November 2023. Data were collected from 341 patients with essential hypertension, attending medical clinics at TH Kalutara who have been on treatment for ≥ 3 months, with at least one antihypertensive drug. Patients with dementia, pregnant women, and hypertensive patients who missed at least 2 clinic visits were excluded. The study sample was selected using systematic sampling and data were collected from every other patient.

An interviewer-administered questionnaire was administered for the data collection, targeting on sociodemographic, lifestyle, drug and family history-related factors. IBM SPSS version 23 was used for data analysis. Percentages, frequency distributions, mean, and standard deviations were used to describe data. Chi-square test was used to assess the associations and $p < 0.05$ significance level.

Results: The results showed that 33.1% ($n=113$) of the patients had uncontrolled hypertension. The mean age of the participants was 60.2 ± 9.56 . The factors associated with uncontrolled hypertension were $\text{BMI} \geq 25 \text{ kg/m}^2$, low levels of exercise, alcohol consumption (>14 units per week), smoking (>5 pack years) and the number of anti-hypertensives ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusions: The study concluded that around one-third of hypertensive patients had uncontrolled blood pressure, with modifiable risk factors such as high BMI ($>25 \text{ kg/m}^2$), lack of physical activity, alcohol binge consumption, and smoking being significant contributors. It emphasized the need for further research on the difficulties faced by hypertensive patients in rural and suburban areas of Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Hypertension, Associated factors, medical clinic, Teaching Hospital Kalutara, Sri Lanka.