Introduction

• Hypertension is a major public health challenge worldwide.
• It is estimated 26% of the Saudi population have hypertension.
• An assessment of hypertension-related knowledge, attitudes, and lifestyle practices (KAP) among hypertensive patients in Saudi Arabia is lacking.
• Such assessment is needed for Ministry of Health officials to improve hypertension awareness campaigns and patient education efforts.

Objectives

• We conducted a study to assess the level of hypertension-related KAP in hypertensive patients attending primary health care centers (PHCCs) in Saudi Arabia and determine whether differences in KAP are related to demographic characteristics and other factors such as disease duration.

Methods

• Study area
  The city of Jeddah, which includes a total of 45 PHCCs.
• Study design and sample size
  • A cross-sectional study on hypertensive patients attending 5 of Jeddah’s PHCCs during July 2018.
  • Sample size = 220 Participants with 100% response rate.
• Ethical consideration
  The study was approved by the Medical Research and Studies Department in Jeddah at the Directorate of Health Affairs as well as Emory University’s IRB.
  • Verbal consent was obtained from study participants.
• Inclusion criteria
  • Hypertensive patients attending the chronic disease clinic or the general internal medicine clinic.
  • All visiting hypertensive patients were eligible and there was no exclusion criteria.
• Data collection tool
  Participants were interviewed one on one in Arabic using an adapted structured questionnaire, which evaluated hypertension-related knowledge (6 questions), attitudes (5 questions), and lifestyle practices (6 questions).
• Study variables
  • Independent variables: Age, sex, education level, marital status, occupation, duration of hypertension, body mass index (BMI), family history of hypertension, smoking history, and diet type.
  • Dependent variables: KAP parameters
  • Statistical Analysis
    Descriptive statistics and Chi-square test were used.

Results

Demographics:

Participants were: 53% men; 67% aged ≥41 years; 81% married; 32% graduate degree holders; and 27% employed.

Clinical and anthropometric characteristics:

47% were overweight based on their BMI values, 52% diabetic; 56% non-smokers; 75% have family history of hypertension; and 39% had hypertension for <5 years.

Knowledge parameters:

• The youngest age group (21-30 years), men, and those with a shorter duration of hypertension were more likely to correctly identify smoking as a risk factor for hypertension (P < 0.001).
• A higher educational level was statistically significantly associated with more knowledge about the complications of hypertension and its risk factors particularly salt intake, obesity, and smoking (P < 0.0001).

Attitude parameters:

• Men acknowledged the importance of regular follow-up with the physician (P = 0.0002) and regular exercise (P < 0.0001) more than women.
• Educational level was statistically significantly associated with acknowledging the importance of regular exercise (P < 0.01).
• Shorter duration of hypertension was associated with higher acknowledgment of the importance of regular exercise (P < 0.001).

Conclusion

• A high proportion of surveyed hypertensive patients had a good level of hypertension-related knowledge and attitudes but low level of hypertension-related practices.
• An urgent attention and efforts from healthcare providers are required to improve the level of hypertension-related practices.
• Similar studies with larger samples and wider coverage of regions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are needed.

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