

Hypertension Prevalence in Sri Lanka: A Literature Review

P.L.M. Pemasiri*, V.A. Liyanage, V.L. De Silva, A.I. Karunarathna,
R.M.N.M.C. Rathnayaka

KIU University, Thalangama Koswatta, 10120, Sri Lanka
**lakshikamadhubhashini528@gmail.com*

Hypertension, a major non-communicable disease worldwide, significantly contributes to conditions like cardiovascular disease, stroke, and kidney failure. In Sri Lanka, a rapidly developing lower-middle-income nation, its prevalence is increasing, driven by factors such as urbanization, shifting demographics, and changes in lifestyle and dietary habits. This review aimed to investigate the prevalence of hypertension in Sri Lanka, contributing risk factors, and highlight high-risk groups. We focus on identifying emerging trends, patterns, and existing gaps in research to support targeted public health strategies and improve hypertension management across the population. This literature review employed a qualitative narrative approach, drawing on 25 peer-reviewed journals, government publications, and national studies, including the Sri Lanka Health and Aging Study, published between 2014 and 2024. Databases were searched on Google Scholar and PubMed, using keywords such as “hypertension,” “Sri Lanka,” and prevalence”. The review aimed to examine the prevalence, risk factors, and demographic differences associated with hypertension in Sri Lanka. Studies included focused on adult populations. The analysis focused on variables like age, gender, urban versus rural location, and comorbidities. The review sought to consolidate existing knowledge and identify trends and gaps in hypertension research. The results indicate that around one-third of adults in Sri Lanka suffer from hypertension, with a higher prevalence ranging from 20.9% to 39.2% seen in older adults, urban dwellers, individuals with obesity, and those with multiple chronic conditions such as diabetes. Additionally, hypertension is significantly linked to factors like income levels, lack of physical activity, and a family history of the condition. Women over 50, urban residents, and individuals with obesity or diabetes were found to be at higher risk. Expressive regional and socioeconomic differences were also observed. The increasing prevalence of hypertension in Sri Lanka demands a cause for public health interventions. Future research should emphasize gender-specific analysis, objective evaluations of lifestyle factors, and comprehensive national surveillance. Enhancing health education, expanding screening programs, and promoting lifestyle modification initiatives are essential strategies to mitigate the burden and prevent the associated complications of hypertension.

Keywords: Hypertension, Sri Lanka, prevalence, risk factors, non-communicable disease