

Evaluating the Age-wise Prevalence of Hypertension among the General Public of Sri Lanka Attended the Hypertension Screening Programme Conducted during the Open Day of the University of Peradeniya

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Hypertension is a serious and prevalent health issue with significant implications for public health and a primary contributor to cardiovascular disease and premature mortality. Screening plays a vital role in preventing hypertension and its complications. The hypertension screening programme conducted during the University of Peradeniya's Open Day on July 1st, 2023 provided an ideal setting to conduct this retrospective study aimed to evaluate the age-wise prevalence of hypertension in the Sri Lankan general public. Data from 642 participants which was already collected for administrative purposes during the screening programme was analysed using IBM SPSS software (version 26) to evaluate the age-wise prevalence of hypertension using cutoff values 140mmHg systolic and 90mmHg diastolic according to the hypertension management guidelines by the American Heart Association and was further analyzed to assess the correlation of the prevalence of hypertension with age using Pearson correlation analysis. The participants were provided a rest period of 10 minutes before blood pressure measurement. The analysis showed a positive ($r=+0.318$), statistically significant ($p<0.001$) correlation with a notable prevalence of hypertension in all age groups with a more than 30% prevalence from age 30 onwards with a drastic increase (more than 60%) after 50 years. Therefore, it is advisable to conduct proactive screening programmes from age 30 onwards to detect the individuals early and direct them to medical intervention thus reducing the likelihood of complications, resulting in the reduction of morbidity and economic burden on individuals as well as the healthcare system.

Keywords: Hypertension, Prevalence, Age-wise, Sri Lanka, General Public