

Awareness about Modifiable Risk Factors and Adherence to Medication among Hypertensive Patients in a Tertiary Care Hospital in Kandy District

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Hypertension affects one in every four Sri Lankans over the age of 20. Adequate knowledge about the modifiable risk factors of hypertension and medication adherence is imperative in achieving good blood pressure control in patients. This study aims to assess the awareness about modifiable risk factors, and adherence to the medication among hypertensive patients attending follow-up clinics at the Teaching Hospital Peradeniya. This descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out on 354 hypertensive patients above 40 years of age, attending the hypertensive clinic at Teaching Hospital Peradeniya. The subjects were recruited through a systematic sampling method. Statistical analysis was done by using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics were presented as frequency, percentages, and as mean \pm standard deviation for continuous variables (SD). Cross tabulations were done to explore the associations between socio-demographic characteristics and knowledge about modifiable risk factors and medication adherence of the patients by the chi-square test. P value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant. Of the assessed, 36.7% had average, 29.9% had good and 33.3% had poor levels of awareness about modifiable risk factors. A significant association was observed between knowledge and the duration of disease ($P < 0.05$), educational status ($p = < 0.001$), and occupation ($p = < 0.001$). A significant relationship was observed between the medication adherence level and duration of disease ($P = 0.005$), and occupation ($p < 0.05$). 52.0% medication adherence was at an intermediate level. Forgetfulness and interruptions of daily routine were common reasons for non-adherence. Hypertensive patients' knowledge about modifiable risk factors was at an average level and medication adherence was at an intermediate level. Targeted health education strategies are needed to improve the patients' knowledge about modifiable risk factors of hypertension and increase medication compliance to achieve blood pressure control and prevent adverse consequences.

Keywords – Hypertension, Modifiable risk factors, Medication adherence, Teaching hospital Peradeniya