

Hypertension in a Primary Care Setting: Control and Pattern of Prescribing

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Objective: To measure the level of blood pressure control among people with hypertension attending National Bank of Bahrain Health Center at Dair (NBB Dair) and to evaluate the pattern of prescribing by the treating physicians.

Design: A retrospective clinical study.

Setting: NBB Dair Health Center.

Method: The prescriptions of patients with chronic diseases from 1st of April till 30th of June 2009 were reviewed. All prescriptions of antihypertensive agents were included in the study. In addition, the patients' records were reviewed. The following data were recorded: recent blood pressure (BP) reading, presence of co-morbidities, dosage of drugs used and current regimen. Controlled hypertension is defined as systolic less than 140 mmHg and diastolic less than 90 mmHg in the absence of diabetes and/or Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). BP less than 130/80 is used to define controlled BP in the presence of these conditions.

Result: Five hundred and seventy-three prescriptions were included in the study. Females constituted 61.6% of the total sample. About half of the patients 272 (47.5%) had concomitant diabetes and/or dyslipidemia. The overall control rate was 35.8%; it dropped to 26.6% in patients with diabetes. Gender difference was found in the level of control ($P=0.00002$). It was better in females, but was poor among patients above 60 in both sexes. Thirty-four percent of the patients were using a single free drug. The use of fixed drug combination was uncommon in the studied population.

Conclusion: Although BP control among the studied population is better than that found in several hypertension surveys, the control level is still far from ideal and it is important to improve it to reduce the burden of cardiovascular diseases and its complications.

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