

PREVALENCE OF HYPERTENSION IN A LARGE POPULATION
GROUP IN THE CENTRAL PROVINCE

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Hypertension is frequently seen among hospital inpatients in Sri Lanka. The prevalence of hypertension in Sri Lanka is not known.

A survey was therefore carried out from Dec. 1984 to Feb. 1986 to determine the prevalence of hypertension in a sample of 10,005 people above the age of 20 years. All of them were visitors of patients in the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya. During visiting hours in the afternoon and in the evening, blood pressure was checked at the entrance to the hospital in all individuals who volunteered. All age strata of the adult population were represented and most of the subjects belonged to the lower/middle social classes. Standard cardiovascular survey methods as recommended by WHO were used.

29.94/1,000 had an elevated diastolic blood pressure of 90 mmHg or more. 105.6/1,000 persons had an elevated diastolic blood pressure of 95 mmHg or more. 30.8/1,000 persons had diastolic blood pressure equal to or above 110 mmHg.

The prevalence of elevated blood pressure increased with age in both sexes from 1.4 per 1,000 persons for those under 20 years to 279.7 per 1,000 persons for those 61 - 70 years of age.

When the findings of the present study are compared with that of the Community Hypertension Evaluation Clinic (CHEC) programme there appears to be a larger number of mild hypertensive (≥ 90 mmHg) among Sri Lankan adults when compared to Americans. The prevalence of moderate (≥ 95 mmHg) and severe hypertension (≥ 110 mmHg) in Sri Lankans is comparable to that of Americans

The final year medical undergraduates of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, participated in the survey and Mr. K. Suraweera helped in the analysis of data.

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Reference

Stamler J. et al (1976) *Journal American Medical Assoc.* 235.2299