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Body Mass Index and frequency of hypertension

Shah Babar Khan Fcps ii trainee kp, Pakistan

Statement of the problem: Among various risk factors of hypertension, obesity is considered one of its causes with different mechanisms leading to high blood pressure affecting diastolic more than systolic BP.

Methodology: A cross sectional study was performed in the urban areas of Peshawar KP, Pakistan. A total of 2548 participants, of either gender or age above 18 years were randomly recruited from various occupational groups of Peshawar heart study (PHS) and data collected. Subjects were divided into obese and non-obese based on BMI. Participants with BMI of 25 and above were taken as obese and those less than 25 were considered non-obese. Systolic and diastolic blood pressures were defined based on published guidelines. Pearson Ranked correlation (Y) was used to determine correlation between the variables.

Findings: Of the total study population, 1015(39.6%) were non-obese and 1533(60.4%) were obese. In non-obese group, 16.7 % of individuals had systolic hypertension and 25.7 % had diastolic hypertension. In obese group, 36.3% had systolic hypertension and 51.1% had diastolic hypertension. Mean systolic BP in non-obese was 120.8±32.7 mmHg (80-220) while it was 130.7±38.2 mmHg (80-230) in obese subjects. Mean diastolic BP was 78.8±18.9 mmHg (50-130) in non-obese while it was 85.7±20.1 mmHg (50-140) in obese individuals. Pearson Rank Correlation (Y) was weakly positive, i.e. +0.2.

Conclusion and significance: Systolic and diastolic hypertension has weak positive correlation with obesity.

dr.shahbabarkhan@yahoo.com