

Is a New Crash Coming?

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Hypertension is a major risk factor for the development of cardiovascular, cerebrovascular and renal diseases, among others. It has been calculated that approximately 13.5% of deaths and 6.0% of DALYs (Disability Adjusted Life-Years) are attributed to this condition worldwide [1]. Hypertension is very common. In fact, about one third of adults have hypertension, and this percentage increases with age [2]. In fact, it has been estimated that these figures will increase in the next years [3], and one of the main reasons proposed to explain this projection is the continuous ageing of the population.

However, there is a new and more important threat: hypertension in children. Primary hypertension in this population is markedly increasing. Thus, in United States the current prevalence of hypertension in children is about 3-5% [4]. This increase in primary hypertension observed in early ages is directly related to the pernicious life style habits that have occurred worldwide in the last decades. That is to say obesity, sedentary life, and unhealthy diets [5]. Unfortunately, despite the importance of this disease, hypertension is not being detected soon enough for beginning treatment to decrease death and disability [6].

In the last years there is a growing interest of scientific societies to aware about this new epidemic [7], and safe and effective antihypertensive agents are nowadays available [8] to actually reduce the prevalence of hypertension. Nonetheless, it is crucial to establish different health policies to imply everybody (i.e. governments, schools, physicians, nurses, family) with the aim of not only prevention through achieving healthy life styles, but early diagnosis through screening children and adolescents for hypertension during routine visits at school or paediatrics as well [8,9].

Since the costs associated to hypertension in adults are very high [10], whether no action is taken to prevent the development of hypertension in children, the consequences of high blood pressure could be a new economic crash in the following decades.

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