

Hypertension More Common in Poor, Middle-income Countries



According to a new study, middle- and lower-income countries have a higher rate of hypertension than high-income countries. The study is published in the journal *Circulation*.

The rate of hypertension in middle- and lower-income countries increased by nearly eight percentage points from 2000 to 2010 as compared to a decline of 3 percentage point in higher income countries.

The study was conducted by Jiang He of Tulane University School of Public Health and team. They analysed studies published from Jan. 1, 1995, to Dec. 31, 2014, addressed sex- and age-specific rates of high blood pressure, and grouped countries using a World Bank classification system.

Based on the estimate, 1.39 billion adults across the globe had high blood pressure in 2010 compared with 921 million in 2000. The prevalence of hypertension in high-income countries dropped from 31.1 percent in 2000 to 28.5 percent in 2010 as compared to an increase from 23.8 to 31.5 percent in middle and low-income countries over the same time period.

Findings also showed that the East Asia and Pacific region had the highest rate of increase in adults with 439 million people suffering from hypertension. Similar increases have been observed in the South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa regions with 114 million more people and 78 million more people respectively living with hypertension in 2010 than in 2000.

Findings also showed disparities between middle- and lower-income countries and high-income countries when it came to hypertension awareness and treatment. Around 38 percent of people in middle and lower income countries were aware of their high blood pressure status as compared to 67 percent in high-income countries. Similarly, 56 percent of people in high-income countries were likely to receive treatment as compared to only 29 percent in middle and lower-income countries.

Samira Asma, the chief of the Global Noncommunicable Diseases Branch in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Global Health Protection highlights the need for national and international stakeholders to collaborate in order to find ways to combat hypertension. "We should not let any patient go undiagnosed and untreated," Asma said. She called for "putting in an effective system where people have access to medication and can receive treatment and can be deployed in lower-income countries."

Source: *Circulation*
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