Focus on High blood pressure

February 2014

KEY FACTS

• Worldwide, it is estimated that high blood pressure causes 51% of deaths due to stroke and 45% due to heart disease
• Hypertension is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Metabolic risk factors such as diabetes, high blood cholesterol and obesity, increase the risk of complications from high blood pressure, including heart disease, stroke, kidney failure and blindness
• Treating hypertension results in a 40% decrease in the risk of stroke and 15% decrease in risk of MI

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

• Hypertension is referred to as the “silent killer” since most individuals do not manifest symptoms
• Hypertension is defined as a blood pressure: ≥140 systolic /90 diastolic (or ≥130 or ≥80 among people with diabetes or renal disease)

WHO IS AT RISK?

• Certain behaviors and lifestyle choices are risk factors for hypertension and cardiovascular disease (in “Prevention” below)
• Proportion of people with hypertension increases with age: 1 in 10 people in their 20s -30s; 5 in 10 people in their 50s
• In the Western Pacific Region (WPR), 37% of adults older than 24 have high blood pressure
• In the Philippines, 25% of adults 21 years old and above have high blood pressure

HYPERTENSION REPORTED IN TYPHOON YOLANDA

Overall there have been over 14,000 consultations for hypertension in these areas. The following charts and tables show information from SPEED consultations in select typhoon-affected areas (Regions VI and VIII) from 10 Nov 2013 – 8 Feb 2014. Results shown are dependent upon facility reporting which varied over time.

REGION VI

In Region VI, there have been 3,829 consultations for hypertension reported through SPEED, mostly from the Capiz province. Hypertension consultations in Capiz and Iloilo peaked in the second week of December. As a proportion of all consultations, however, Antique spiked in the last week of November while Iloilo spiked in the last week of January.

REGION VIII

In Region VIII, there have been 10,481 consultations for hypertension reported through SPEED, mostly from Leyte province. Hypertension consultations in Leyte appeared to increase and plateau from the time of the typhoon until mid December and decrease by the end of December. This was however, a reflection of total consultations in that time period.
PREVENTION

Measures to Prevent Cardiovascular Events in Hypertensive Patients:

- **Stop Smoking**
  - In Western Pacific Region (WPR), 25% of adults >15 yrs smoke tobacco daily
  - In the Philippines, 28.3% of population aged 15 years old and over currently smoke tobacco.

- **Control blood sugar** if diabetic

- **Treat dyslipidemia** (high cholesterol)

- **Reduce intake of sodium and diet rich in fat**
  - Consume a diet rich in vegetables, fruit, and low fat dairy products.
  - In Western Pacific region (WPR), 25.4% adults >20 are overweight. In the Philippines, 27% adults >20 are overweight and obese.

- **Maintain a body mass index (BMI) between 18.5-24.9 kg/m2.**
  - In the Philippines, 27% adults >20 are overweight and obese.

- **Engage in regular aerobic exercise** or do brisk walking at least 30 minutes a day
  - In Western Pacific region (WPR), 33.2% of people over 15 yrs have insufficient physical activity
  - In the Philippines, high levels of physical inactivity is also reported among adults >20 at work (76%), non-work (76%), travel (94%), and leisure (93%).

- **Limit alcohol intake to less than 1 oz/day of ethanol (24oz of beer, 8oz wine, or 2oz 80 proof whiskey).**

TREATMENT

**Hypertension**:

- All cases should be seen by a healthcare provider
- Oral anti-hypertensive medication should be administered
- Most patients will need at least 2 agents to attain blood pressure targets. Less than half will meet their target with monotherapy. Over 30% need ≥ 3 agents to meet their goal.


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This weekly EWARN Summary is published by the World Health Organization (WHO), Philippines. It is based on preliminary surveillance data from multiple sources, including the Surveillance in Post-Extreme Emergencies and Disasters (SPEED) system, the Philippines Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response System (PIDS), and event-based reporting system.

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**Weekly Summaries are available at**: [http://www.wpro.who.int/philippines/typhoon_haiyan/en/index.html](http://www.wpro.who.int/philippines/typhoon_haiyan/en/index.html)

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