SUMMARY

Objectives: This study was carried out to investigate the Blood Pressure Profile among young adult male and non-pregnant female patients (aged 18 – 50 years) attending an outpatient clinic in Ibadan, Oyo State so as to establish whether routine blood pressure checks in this age group is essential. It also sought to determine risk factors present in those found to be hypertensive and to detect complications of hypertension if present.

The study was a descriptive cross-sectional study, based at the Out-Patient Clinic of the Catholic Hospital Oluyoro Oke-Ofa, Ibadan. The study population was consecutive young adult male and non-pregnant female patients aged 18 - 50 years who attended the hospital for the first time between January and March 2011, and met the inclusion criteria and consented to participate in the study. Semi-structured questionnaire was administered and physical examination was carried out. Laboratory analysis of blood and urine was done for the subjects with confirmed hypertension.

A total of 405 adults participated in the study out of which 154 were males and 251 were females. The mean age of the participants was 31.6 years. Their mean BMI was 23.7 kg/m² and the mean BP was 129.5/85.7 mmHg. One hundred and twenty-four (30.6%) were found to be hypertensive. The male hypertensives were 51 and the females 73 giving a ratio of almost 1:1.4. The mean BMI of these hypertensives was 24.7 kg/m² while their mean BP was 154.8/101.5 mmHg. Sixty-six of the hypertensives had stage 1 hypertension while 58 had stage 2 hypertension.

The study found that age, occupation, body mass index, waist circumference and hip circumference were significantly associated with high blood pressure. Evidence of target end-organ damage seen include hypertensive heart disease in 23(18.5%) of the 124, retinopathy in 5(4.0%), congestive cardiac failure in 3(2.4%), nephropathy in 3(2.4%) and encephalopathy in 1(0.8%). There was also laboratory evidence of target end—organ damage.
**Conclusion:** Undetected cases of hypertension, with complications and target end-organ damage, exist in young adults in Ibadan, Oyo state and family physicians, on the front line of disease prevention, should pay attention to case finding for hypertension in this age group.