Profile

The International Society of Hypertension (ISH) joined the International Society and Federation of Cardiology in the late 1960s as one of its eight scientific councils. Today, the ISH has more than 1100 individual and corporate members from 60 countries. Membership is limited to scientists who have accomplished meritorious original investigations in the field of hypertension or related topics. As such, it is specifically a society which addresses scientists and physicians.

One of its major activities is the organisation of scientific meetings. This involves in the first place bi-annual large-scale meetings which are held on a rotate basis in the various countries. The latest, highly successful congress of this type was held in June 1990 in Montréal (Canada) organised by Drs. J. de Champlain, P. Hamet, S. Carière and the Canadian Hypertension Society. The scientific level was generally considered to be excellent and very much up-to-date. The attraction of this meeting was also reflected in the participation of over 5000 delegates.

Madrid will be the venue of the next meeting (1992), to be organised by Dr. J. Rodicio and his colleagues from the Spanish Hypertension Society. The 1994, 1996 and 1998 meetings will be convened in Melbourne (Australia), Glasgow (Scotland) and Amsterdam (The Netherlands) respectively. Meetings of this type are flourishing—the major worry is the ever increasing number of participants and the concomitant fear that the assemblies are becoming too large.

to be continued on page 2

WHL News

WHL Welcomes Its 30th Member
The WHL is pleased to welcome the Inter-American Society of Hypertension as its 30th member. Hypertension is a significant health problem in Central and South America and the Inter-American Society of Hypertension aims to disseminate knowledge on hypertension among both physicians and the general public, as well as to promote the control of hypertension. As a regional member it will represent in the WHL Council those countries from the Americas which are not otherwise represented currently. For further information contact Dr. Oscar Carretero, Inter-American Society of Hypertension, 2799 W. Grand Boulevard, Detroit, Michigan, USA.

Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring: Reports Released
The US National High Blood Pressure Education Program (NHBPEP), the German Hypertension League and the Consensus Symposium recently published concise reports (1, 2, 3, 4) on Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring to be continued on page 2

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In 1989 the European Society of Hypertension (ESH) was created by European members of the ISH. The profile of the ESH was recently presented by its president, Prof. W. Birkenh"ager, in the WHL Newsletter (no. 9, February 1990). ISH and ESH will collaborate closely and coordinate their meetings and activities — as they do with those of the International Society and Federation of Cardiology. It has become very clear that hypertension is a medical discipline in its own right. It will be one of the goals of the ISH in the near future to promote its official recognition.

Another interesting activity of the ISH is the creation of a visiting faculty, under the guidance of Dr. Stevo Julius. This faculty aims particularly at interaction with the developing countries, in order to promote modern information on research and treatment in the field of hypertension.

While ABPM is not cost-effective for all hypertensive patients, it can assist in the evaluation of particular problems like target organ complications, syncopal episodes, episodic hypertension and autonomic dysfunction.

The reports can be requested from the WHL members' offices or from the Newsletter office.

WHL Material

Patient Seminars

The German Hypertension League has developed a curriculum and slide series (both in German at present) for patient seminars. Target groups for these meetings are patients with hypertension and their families as well as other members of the general public interested in elevated blood pressure. Topics discussed include nutrition, sport, stress, blood pressure measurements, drugs and stroke, as they relate to hypertension. The workshops usually last one day and are directed by a physician with a special interest in this field. The German Hypertension League provides background material and teaching aids. It also helps to organise these events, advertises them through posters and newspaper advertisements and arranges sponsorship for the costs incurred. These are usually taken over by one or several medical insurance and pharmaceutical companies. Last year over 20 such workshops were organised with attendance ranging between 100 and 1000 participants each. These patient seminars are one of the most successful activities of the German Hypertension League. For further information contact Dr. S. Gleichmann, Verein zur Förderung medizinischer Prävention und Rehabilitation, Lütnantsfeld 3, D-4970 Bad Oeynhausen, Germany.

In Focus

Physical Exercise for Health

The relationship between blood pressure and physical activity has been confirmed by a number of observational and intervention studies. The WHL has recently published an In Focus Statement (1) on this important topic, prepared by R. Fagard (Leuven) and approved by all WHL member leagues. In normotensive people regular aerobic exercise results in a decrease of both systolic and diastolic blood pressure of about 4 mmHg, in hypertensive patients a 6-11 mmHg decrease was observed. Physical activity has positive effects on human health in a number of conditions over and beyond those directly related to hypertension. Physically active men and women also live longer.

Physical training can be advocated by the general physician as part of an overall treatment regimen for hypertensive patients, which may or may not include pharmaceuticals. However, patients need to be given detailed instructions for the exercise. They also need continuing encouragement and regular follow-up, to improve compliance with the exercise prescriptions. So-called endurance training is the preferred type of exercise. Physicians filling out prescriptions should clearly state the preferred type, frequency and duration of the exercise, for example, brisk walking five times a week for 30 minutes, or jogging three times a week for 20 minutes. Intensity can be expressed by the level of perceived exertion, for example: "You should be able to talk during your exercise; if you cannot, you should decrease the exercise."

Physical exercise certainly enhances the individual sense of well-being, and it can even improve life expectancy. Such exercise need not be arduous and can be designed to fit into everyday activities; it should be part of the standard therapy for hypertension.

Reprints of this and other In Focus Statements (Self-measurement of Blood Pressure, Weight Control in the Management of Hypertension, Alcohol and Hypertension) are available from the Newsletter Office or the WHL Secretariat.

Reference:


Poster from the US National High Blood Pressure Education Program
Management of Essential Hypertension: The Once-A-Day Era

Reflecting the current trends in the treatment of hypertension, the theme of the new edition of this popular book is the "once-a-day era", whereas that of the previous edition in this series was the "low-dose era". The book is clearly clinically oriented and does not discuss causes or theories of human or experimental hypertension. For those interested in these aspects, other books are recommended. Appropriately, the nonpharmacologic approach to treating hypertension is described at the beginning. The book then discusses the mode of action, dosages, and side effects of currently approved antihypertensive drugs and also of those still in the experimental stage. In addition, it provides a good background on the use of each class of antihypertensive drugs. The author reviews succinctly and clearly the underlying pathophysiology of hypertension in particular groups of hypertensive patients, and thereby demonstrates the logical use of a particular drug or class of drugs for each particular group. In doing so, the author breaks away from the traditional step-care approach to the treatment of hypertension, suggesting instead an individualized approach to the care of patients with hypertension.

S. G. Chrysant

Calendar

WHL Council Conference
September 27—29, 1991
Barcelona, Spain
Information:
WHL Secretariat or Newsletter Office

64th Scientific Sessions of the American Heart Association
November 11—14, 1991
Anaheim, USA
Information:
American Heart Association
7320 Greenville Avenue
Dallas, TX 75231, USA

National Congress of Cardiology
January 14—17, 1992
Havana, Cuba
Information:
Cuban Society of Cardiology,
Calle 4, No. 4007 e/17 y 19
Vedado, Havana 4, Cuba

30th EWPHE meeting:
Progress of the Syst-Eur Trial
January 16—17, 1992
Brussels, Belgium
Information:
Prof. Dr. A. Amery
U.Z. Gasthuisberg, Div. Hypertension
49, Herestraat
3000 Leuven, Belgium

4th International Symposium:
Hypertension in the Community
March 8—12, 1992
Jerusalem, Israel
Information:
Secretariat
P.O.B. 50006,
Tel Aviv, Israel 61500