Profile

Results from the Egyptian National Hypertension Project (NHP - for more information see article on US-Egypt Cooperative Health Study) showed that Egypt has one of the highest prevalences of hypertension in the world. The weighted national estimate of the prevalence of hypertension in adult Egyptians was 26%. Furthermore, only 24% of the hypertensives were receiving treatment, and 8% had their blood pressure controlled.

The Egyptian Society of Cardiology, concerned about preliminary results from the NHP in March 1992, approved a proposal presented by Dr. M. Mohsen Ibrahim, the principal investigator of the NHP, to establish the Egyptian Hypertension League (EHL) as a branch of the Egyptian Society of Cardiology. A board of directors was elected in the same year.

The goals of the League are: (1) To encourage research in the field of hypertension, (2) To develop hypertension education programs for both the public and the physicians, (3) To disseminate information about current trends in hypertension through meetings, symposia and national conferences, (4) To plan and execute a nationwide campaign targeted to increase public awareness of the problem of hypertension, (5) To establish communication links with other national and international organizations and hypertension societies, to help exchange information and encourage interaction among scientists, speakers and young investigators.

A major accomplishment of the EHL was the organization of the First Pan Arab Conference on continued on page 2

WHL News

New Members
During the past months the World Hypertension League has continued to attract new members. We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members from Chile (Chilean Hypertension Society), Cuba (Cuban National Committee for the Study of Hypertension), Egypt (Egyptian Hypertension League) and Peru (Peruvian Hypertension Society). Two organizations were admitted to associate membership: We are glad to have the European Heart Network and the Peruvian Society of Cardiology with us. Thus, the WHL now has 74 members.

New Hypertension Leagues Founded in Asia
The World Hypertension League was informed that national hypertension leagues have been founded in South Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, and the Republic of the Philippines. Hypertension control thus is being reinforced in South East Asia. The World Hypertension League will assist the new Leagues to get established in any possible way. For more information on the new leagues contact the editorial office.

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Hypertension in collaboration with the NHP and the US National Heart Lung and Blood Institute. This conference was the first of its kind in the Arab World and the Middle East with 950 participants from Egypt, Europe, USA and 14 Arab countries. The Second Pan Arab Conference on Hypertension will be held in Beirut, Lebanon, in July 1995.

From December 14 to 16, 1994, the EHL held its first national scientific meeting in the Red Sea resort of Sharm El Sholkh, Egypt. To encourage young investigators, two awards (each of 10,000 Egyptian pounds) have been given to the best works in the fields of clinical and epidemiological hypertension. Current activities of the EHL include the organization of regular scientific meetings, the establishment of a hypertension referral center at Cairo University and the conduction of a fund raising campaign to sponsor the EHL educational programs and research project. The EHL has presented a detailed protocol for a nationwide physician and public education program at the Egyptian Ministry of Health. The program is to serve as a preventative measure against hypertension. This ambitious educational project will be one of the major activities of the EHL for the next three years.

Dr. M. Mohsen Ibrahim
President, Egyptian Hypertension League
Cairo University, Dept. of Cardiology
1 El-Sherifein Street, Abdin
Cairo 11111, Egypt

New Reports from the US National High Blood Pressure Education Program Available

The NHBPEP published two new working group reports:


Copies can be obtained by writing to the NHBPEP, Box 120/80, Bethesda, MD 20992, USA.

United States – Egypt Cooperative Health Study

from the Newsletter's Regional Editor
Dr. Edward J. Roccella, Bethesda, USA

Health care is an integral part of economic and national development. Throughout the world, hypertension is a medical and economic problem. Such is the case in Egypt, where hypertension costs that nation billions of dollars each year in medical care, hospitalizations, disability, rehabilitation and days lost from work. To address these issues, in 1989 the United States and Egyptian governments entered into an agreement to study and address the health consequences of hypertension in Egypt. Scientists from the University of Cairo, Johns Hopkins University and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute developed a joint research program – the National Hypertension Program (NHP). The NHP program is divided into three components. (1) A national survey among Egyptians to determine the prevalence of hypertension and characterize the effects of socioeconomic and demographic factors of hypertension in Egypt and to determine the prevalence of cardiovascular, renal and neurological complications associated with high blood pressure. (2) A hypertension prevention and control campaign to encourage Egyptians to have their blood pressures checked and to educate them about the value of high blood pressure control. (3) An evaluation component to measure program progress. Although NHP is only five years old, important results are already available. The national survey has identified a prevalence of hypertension in Egypt that is one of the highest in the world. The first Pan Arab conference on hypertension was conducted in Cairo in December 1993. A blood pressure measurement training and certification program has been established. Agreements on joint data analysis and publication teams have been developed by the US and Egyptian collaborators. This collaborative project demonstrates the utility of research partnerships in addressing important public health problems.
The conference arrangements are progressing well. Many of the invited chairs and speakers have confirmed their participation. For the submission of abstracts (not to exceed 250 words) until March 31, along with mail and fax (+1 613 830 0411), an e-mail address now is available: achockal@hpb.hwc.ca.

In addition to the program, a number of pre- and post-conference symposia, to be held on June 21 and 24 are being prepared. They are sponsored by Merck Frosst, Servier, Beier, Sandoz (all Canada), the Ottawa Heart Institute, Marion Merrell Dow, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, Health Canada, and the WHO.

The free Conference Welcome Reception will take place on June 21 at Parliament Hill. Tickets for the Gala Evening on June 23 at the Museum of Civilization are available for CDN $ 65.00.

All in all, a scientifically challenging and socially exciting conference is awaiting you in the beautiful setting of the Canadian Capital, Ottawa.

The detailed program of the Conference will be published in the April issue of the Newsletter.

WHL News continued

Journal of The Lebanese Hypertension League Founded

The Lebanese Hypertension League has started to issue its own journal. As stated in the Editorial of the journal's first issue, it is intended to be both educational and informative. One focus of the journal will be characteristics of the Lebanese population related to the control of hypertension. It is the first journal of its kind in the Arab world. Submission of manuscripts in English and French related to hypertension and its related disorders is encouraged. For further information write to:

Dr. Adel E. Birbari
Lebanese Hypertension League,
American University of Beirut,
Medical Center, Div. of Nephrology,
P.O. Box 113, 6044 Beirut, Lebanon

Obituary

Antoon Amery 1933–1994

For his countless friends all over the world he was just Tony. Having coped for years with an angio-immunoblastic lymphadenopathy, a rare syndrome that turned a year ago into lymphoma, Tony died in his native Leuven on November 2, 1994.

He was active up to the last weeks of his life. His scientific legacy is rich. The bibliography of his writings comprises 950 publications, including the editorship of several major books on hypertension. He was the creator and carrier of two prominent collaborative international studies: the EWPHE study (European Working Party on High Blood Pressure in the Elderly) and the SYSTEUR study (European study of systolic hypertension in the elderly).

Tony was a productive, conscientious and critical scientist; he was also perseverant, discreet, tactful and kind, personality traits that made him an exemplary team leader, founder of the Leuven hypertension “school”, a group of talented disciples who no doubt will continue the unfinished SYSTEUR project, of which he was the architect and moving spirit.

Dr. Amery’s role on the international scene was prominent. Besides being a member of all leading international scientific bodies in the field of hypertension, he was cooperating for decades with the Cardiovascular Diseases Unit of the World Health Organization.

The World Hypertension League loses in Dr. Amery its first president who served the League for two 3-year mandates; but the loss is much heavier than evident from this factual statement: Tony’s spirit and ideas were essential catalysts of the development of WHL. Finally, if we are allowed to be personal, we are losing a dear, dear friend.

Detlev Ganten
Tom Strasser
WHL News continued

WHL International Art Competition: Traveling Exhibition Shown in Valletta, Malta

Data on blood pressure in the Maltese population from the 1984 MONICA study indicate that about one in four adults (26%) was found to have a blood pressure over 160/95 mmHg. Only about half of the population above 55 years had normal blood pressure. Compared to other countries participating in the WHO CINDI program, Malta has one of the highest prevalences of hypertension.

To increase the awareness of hypertension in the population, the Nutrition Unit of the Health Promotion Department of Malta organized an exhibition of the WHL International Art Competition posters at Malta University in Valletta. Combined with an opening ceremony, talks by well known Maltese medical professionals on hypertension, and releases in print media and radio stations, the exhibition was a great success.

You are cordially invited to order the posters for an exhibition in your country.

Calendar

7th European Meeting on Hypertension
June 9–12, 1995
Milan, Italy
Information: Prof. A. Zanchetti
Centro di Fisiologia Clinica e Ipertensione
Università di Milano – Ospedale Maggiore
Via F. Sforza, 35, 20122 Milano, Italy

XVIth Scientific Meeting of the International Society of Hypertension
June 17–20, 1995
Montréal, Canada
Information: General Secretariat
1224, rue Stanley, Suite 211, Montréal, Québec, H2W 1R7, Canada

World Conference on Hypertension Control
June 22–24, 1995
Ottawa, Canada
Information: Dr. Arun Chockalingam
P. O. Box 64064
Ottawa, ON, K1Y 4V1, Canada

10th Interdisciplinary Conference of the International Society on Hypertension in Blacks
June 24–29, 1995
Virgin Islands, USA
Information: ISHIB
2045 Manchester Street, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30324-4110, USA

2nd Pan Arab Congress of Hypertension
July 30 – August 3, 1995
Beirut, Lebanon
Information: Dr. Adil E. Birbari
American University of Beirut Medical Center, P. O. Box 113 6044
Beirut, Lebanon

XVIIth Congress of the European Society of Cardiology
August 20–24, 1995
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Information:
ECOR, European Heart House
2035 Route des Colles, Les Templiers
06903 Sophia Antipolis, Cedex, France