Editorial

Hypertension prevention, management and health education in Chinese communities (HCC)

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is increasing in China and there is a rise in both morbidity and mortality. Hypertension is the leading killer. Hypertension has been demonstrated as the number one attributable risk factor of CVD and stroke in China and worldwide.

According to the Survey on the Status of Nutrition and Health of the Chinese People conducted in 2002, the prevalence of high blood pressure is 18.87% among residents aged 18 and over. It is estimated that there are more than 160 million hypertensives in China. Compared with 1991, the prevalence rate has increased by about 31%. The risk factors associated with high blood pressure are rising among middle aged Chinese. The Chinese population is ageing rapidly. It is known that the prevalence of high blood pressure is higher among the older than the younger people. It is expected that the number of hypertensives will be on the rise in the next few years.

In contrast to the high prevalence and the increasing trend, the rates of awareness, treatment and control of hypertension in China are very low, only 27%, 12% and 3% respectively in 1991; and 30%, 25% and 6% respectively in 2002. Greater efforts are needed to improve awareness and to control high blood pressure in the Chinese population.

There are many reasons for the lower rate of control of hypertension. Many of the grass-roots doctors lack the knowledge of hypertension and its management. We therefore need to renew the concept of the prevention and control of hypertension in China and worldwide.

WHL News

Hypertension as a Role Model for Medical Prevention

The European and the International Society of Hypertension hold their joint meeting HYPERTENSION Berlin 2008 from June 14 to 19, 2008. Congress Chairman is Professor Detlev Ganten, former President of the World Hypertension League. In Berlin, about 7,000 experts from all over the world will be present and will discuss the latest results of medical and scientific research in the field of the prevention, diagnosis and therapy of hypertension. Some of the topics are, for example, dealing with how to prevent stroke, kidney disease and kidney transplantation, elderly people suffering from hypertension and its occurrence in developing countries. Furthermore, both national and international speakers are going to present significant recent studies on hypertension therapy.

In plenary sessions, specialists are going to deal with evolutionary aspects of cardiovascular biology, stem cells therapy and the worldwide significance of cardiovascular diseases. The regular continued on page 3
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A scientific program is accompanied by a variety of opportunities to share scientific knowledge and clinical experience in state-of-the-art lectures, breakfast topical workshops and satellite symposia. (See also calendar on page 4).

Presentations from Member Leagues at the WHL Council Conference in Beijing

The Italian Hypertension League was founded by the late Prof. Cesare Bartorelli in 1975 when, together with Prof. Franz Gross and Dr. Tom Strasser, the idea of a European League Against Hypertension was born. Italy was then among the 15 national hypertension leagues and societies which participated in the First Annual Conference of the World Hypertension League in 1984.

In 1982 the former Italian Study Group of Hypertension was transformed into the Italian Society of Hypertension with the main purpose of promoting scientific research in the field of arterial hypertension.

Both institutions, however, have been working always in tight cooperation and considering also that the purposes of the two institutions were complementary, being the Society mainly scientific and the League mainly educational, in September 2006, during the Congress of the Italian Society of Hypertension, both executive committees decided to fuse into a unique institution named “ITALIAN SOCIETY AND LEAGUE OF HYPERTENSION” (SIIA).

The scientific activities of SIIA, besides organizing yearly a national congress, consist of promoting clinical and basic research in hypertension through the distribution of research grants, fellowships and young investigators awards up to a total of about 300,000 Euros in 2007.

As far as the educational activities are concerned, we participated actively to all editions of the World Hypertension Day (WHD). In particular, the Third WHD of May 17, 2007 has been held in Italy under the High Patronage of the President of the Republic of Italy as well as those of the Prime Minister and of the Ministry of Health.

A national press conference took place in Rome on May 14, 2007 during which the rationale of the WHD was explained together with all information concerning the organization of the event.

The most important national newspapers published a WHD advertisement. Many newspapers and magazines published interviews and articles concerning hypertension and in many radio and TV programs we had the opportunity to talk about hypertension and to explain its relevance as a cardiovascular risk factor.

In 2007 we wanted to focus mainly on the importance of moderate salt intake, physical exercise and losing weight to facilitate blood pressure control.

On Saturday May 19, 2007 in many squares, hospital lobbies and shopping centres all over the country people were offered to have their blood pressure measured and to receive information and suggestions to improve their lifestyle. Leaflets explaining the role of hypertension as a cardiovascular risk factor as well as the importance of reaching and maintaining the goal of blood pressure control in preventing stroke, myocardial infarction and renal disease have been distributed through many pharmacies.

Moreover, a new campaign, aimed at mobilizing population for the necessity of powerful BP control has been implemented by a partnership with the biggest biking race leveraging on massive visibility, at regional and national level, of Giro d’Italia. (from May 12 to June 3, 2007).

With the campaign “Ipertensione al Giro d’Italia”, a stand for prevention and information, has been placed at the finish line of each daily race involving a total of 18 cities. At the stand two physicians measured blood pressure, distributing a booklet to almost 20,000 visitors. Every day the race was broadcasted by RAI (the Italian National public Television) through which Professor Enrico Agabiti Rosei and Professor Bruno Trimarco, President and Vice President, respectively, of the Italian Society and League of Hypertension, and myself, as Past President of the Italian League against Hyper-
tension, had the opportunity to be interviewed and to explain to the public the role of high blood pressure as a risk factor as well as the importance of physical exercise and of the other lifestyle measures in maintaining blood pressure within the normal range.

In conclusion, we can say that in Italy the World Hypertension Day has been very successful so that we decided to launch the slogan "Un giorno che dura un anno" which means "A Day lasting one year" in order to maintain the awareness of the population toward the importance of blood pressure control.

We finally look forward to participating very actively to the next edition of the World Hypertension Day.

Prof. Alessandro Rappelli
Past President
Italian Society and League of Hypertension

The grass-roots doctors must follow the guidelines for the management and treatment of hypertension. For these reasons, the Bureau of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, proposed the project of national hypertension prevention, management and health education in Chinese communities in 2004. The National Center of Cardiovascular Disease was entrusted with the conduct of the project. The objectives are: 1) to treat about a million hypertensives nation-wide through training general physicians, using approved guidelines, including both pharmacological and non-pharmacological management; 2) to effectively increase the control rate and lower the morbidity and mortality of coronary heart disease (CHD) and stroke among the Chinese population; 3) to promote nation-wide control of hypertension, and to enhance public awareness of the importance of hypertension control; and 4) to promote wider use of guideline-oriented hypertension management skills.

The project was planned to last for 5 years. A total of 100 counties or their counterparts will be selected. In each selected county, about 200 grass-roots doctors or health workers will be selected to receive a planned training program according to guideline-oriented treatment of hypertension. Each trained doctor will be asked to use the guideline-oriented treatment for at least 50 hypertensive patients. In sum, a total of about a million hypertensive patients will have received scientifically appropriate modern treatment by the end of the project. Each patient will be treated for at least 1 year during the project, and doctors will be encouraged to treat their patients for a longer time.

In this project, prevention and treatment are integrated. It is expected that the doctors will provide lifetime services to their patients. This project is likely to become a new hypertension health management model that cares for people's health rather than disease, giving priority to prevention. This model is likely to integrate prevention, treatment, and management as a whole, and provides life-long service to the patients. By now, 16 local centers have been registered across the country, 3,000 general physicians from 10 local centers trained, and about 115,000 patients recruited.

This project, which was proposed by the government and implemented by a professional academic institution, namely NCCD, across the whole country, will play a very important role in promoting the guideline-oriented skill and in enhancing public awareness of the importance of prevention and treatment of hypertension. We hope thus to achieve better awareness, prevention and control of CHD and cerebral-cardiovascular disease in China.

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On December 27, 2007, Dr. Michael Bursztyn was elected chairman of the Israel Society of Hypertension. The address of the Society is: Hadassah University Hospital, Dept. of Medicine, Hypertension Unit, Mount-Scopus, PO Box 24035, Jerusalem 91240, Israel.

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Electronic Newsletter Delivery
http://www.worldhypertensionleague.org

WHL Regional Meeting with the 12th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Egyptian Hypertension Society
April 9–11, 2008
Cairo, Egypt
Information: EHS Secretariat
1 El-Diwan Street, Garden City, Cairo, Egypt
Fax: (+202) 2794-8879
E-mail: ehs@link.net

“Measure your Blood Pressure – at Home”
Information: WHL Secretariat
Fax: (+1-604) 291-5927
E-mail: whlsec@sfu.ca

4th International Symposium of Hypertension and 2nd International Workshop of Cardiovascular Risk
May 26–29, 2008
Santa Clara, Cuba
Information:
Prof. Emilio F. González Rodríguez
Chairman HTA 2008 Organizing Committee
UCLV, La Habana, Cuba
Website: http://www.universidad2008.cu
E-mail: hta2008@uclv.edu.cu

22nd Scientific Meeting of the International Society of Hypertension and 18th Meeting of the European Society of Hypertension
June 14–19, 2008
Berlin, Germany
Information:
Hypertension 2008 Conference Secretariat c/o K.I.T. GmbH & KG
Kurfürstendamm 71
10709 Berlin, Germany
Fax: (+49-30) 24603-200
Website: http://www.hypertension2008.com

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