

Correspondence

Prevalence of hypertension & prehypertension among school children

Sir,

Apropos article on distribution of blood pressure and correlates of hypertension in school children¹, the prevalence of hypertension in the studied population has been reported to be 7.6 per cent. It is important to be aware of high prevalence of prehypertension and hypertension in the school-going children. Therefore, it is vital to measure blood pressure even in healthy children during hospital visits, though the US recommendations do not find any benefit or harm in screening children for hypertension for prevention of later development of cardiovascular diseases².

In a study from north India³, it was shown that hypertension was more common in girls and prehypertension was more prevalent in boys. In the current study, it is not clear whether children with prehypertension were included in the calculation of final prevalence of 7.6 per cent. The studied population in this study¹ includes children from government as well as private schools. It could have been interesting if authors had compared data from these two groups. It is likely that children from private schools have high prevalence of hypertension as has been shown by some workers^{4,5} because of the difference in socio-economic status and thereby in lifestyles.

Further, the prevalence of hypertension has been reported after observations during a single visit when it is evident that the prevalence of high blood pressure decreases on subsequent measurements as demonstrated by many workers^{3,6,7}. It would be appropriate to follow these children having high blood pressure to look for the later measurements.

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