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Hypertension and Psychological Health in the 21st Century

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Abstract

Hypertension is also known as high blood pressure. A high systolic blood pressure indicates patient's arteries are experiencing stress. A high diastolic pressure indicates there are stressors that cause cortisol to increase resulting in faster heart rates. Doctor's treatment plan for patients with HBP includes medication, diet and exercise. The treatment plan for patients who have HBP resulting from life stress should include psychiatric care. The treatment plan for HBP requires a holistic lifelong healthy lifestyle. The mind, body and soul can have a positive or negative effect on a patient's BP.

Keywords: Hypertension; Blood pressure; Health

Hypertension and Psychological Health

High blood pressure (HBP) is also known as hypertension. It is becoming too common in the 21st century despite the fact people are more health conscious [1]. Research proves healthy diet and exercise are effective in lowering HBP [2]. However, the diagnosis of hypertension is not decreasing. The concept of a healthy life style must be holistic and consider all factors that contribute to hypertension. This requires identifying the connection of the systolic (top number) and diastolic (bottom number) pressure to the cause when developing a holistic treatment plan for each patient. Perhaps the 21st century treatment for hypertension patients includes total mind, body and soul.

Know your numbers

High blood pressure is a silent killer because it leads to heart attacks and strokes. Hospitals and doctor's office staff measure each patient's blood pressure to break the silent attack of HBP [2]. A patient hears their numbers and information about a healthy blood pressure reading during their visits to the doctor. A blood pressure (BP) reading has a top and bottom number referred as systolic and diastolic pressure [2]. In

adults, a good systolic pressure is 120 mm Hg and a good diastolic pressure 80 mm Hg or less [2]. Each number is a snap shot of each patient's healthcare needs.

Doctors rely on the BP measurement to guide them in developing an appropriate treatment plan for each patient. The systolic pressure is the measurement of the arteries contractions as the heart is compressing and a high number indicates stress on the arteries [3]. The diastolic pressure is the resting pressure the measurement of blood flow between each heartbeat and a high number indicates an elevation in pulse rate [3]. The differences between systolic and diastolic pressure is simply physical causes and mental causes. Therefore, a patient should know their numbers to make adequate lifestyle changes to have a good BP reading.

Healthy life style changes

High blood pressure shakes the core of all patients and they want to correct the problem by any means necessary. Doctors prescribe medication, a healthy diet, and exercise to their patients and many follow the doctor's orders [2]. This treatment is effective in many patients. However, there are some patients living a healthy lifestyle and still have a high diastolic pressure [4]. The question they ask in frustration is what is causing a high diastolic pressure despite a healthy life style of diet and exercise. This leads to the analysis of stress and physical health [4].

Psychological health includes stress and anxieties. Therefore, it is necessary for a patient to seek the professional care of a psychiatrist to identify the stressors and develop a treatment plan [4]. There are also mechanics in psychiatric care because the endocrine system plays a vital role in releasing cortisol that affect the resting BP [5]. The 21st century is the era of holistic healthcare. Therefore, proper treatment for HBP should include psychiatric care. Medication is not the only treatment for HBP in regards to physical healthcare or psychological health care [6]. A holistic care plan should use medications as the last option and if used it should be temporary as the patient makes their holistic care life style changes. A holistic plan of care for HBP is mind, body, and soul.

The mind, body, and soul treatment should align with the patient's beliefs. Many doctors and psychiatrist agree people

become healthier when they reduce their exposure to a busy and noisy environment [5]. Therefore, spending time in nature enjoying its serene sounds is therapeutic and reduces the cortisol levels causing elevations in diastolic pressure that will increase with time of systolic pressure [5]. A healthy life style goes beyond diet and exercise. The mind, body, and soul are a lifelong preventive care plan and an effective treatment plan for HBP.

Conclusion

Patients' lifestyles have an impact on their BP. Doctors need to assess holistically the cause of patient's HBP to provide an appropriate treatment plan. In the 21st century, medication is not the first choice of treatment for HBP. Doctors encourage their patients to switch to a healthy diet, exercise, and relax [6]. However, relaxing is the most difficult part of the treatment plan for most patients who do not know the cause of their stress. In conclusion, physicians should recommend psychiatric care within their HBP treatment plan.

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