

Orthostatic Hypotension among Patients Aged above 65 Years Admitted to Medical Wards in a Tertiary Care Hospital, Sri Lanka

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Abstract : Orthostatic hypotension is prevalent in the elderly population, and it is an important risk factor contributing to falls in the elderly. This study aims to evaluate the prevalence of orthostatic hypotension in hospitalized elderly patients, changes in blood pressure during the hospital stay, morbidities associated with it and its association with falls in the elderly. A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in the National Hospital of Sri Lanka (NHSL) in a sample of 120 patients of age 65 years or above who were admitted to the medical wards. The demographic, clinical data was obtained by an interviewer-administered questionnaire. Two validated questionnaires were used to assess symptoms and effects of orthostatic hypotension and risk factors associated with falls. Orthostatic hypotension on admission and after 3 days of hospital stay was measured by bed-side mercury sphygmomanometer. Prevalence of orthostatic hypotension among the study population was 63.3%(76 patients). But no significant change in the orthostatic hypotension noted after 3 days of hospital admission (SND 0.61, SE= 5.59, p=0.27). There was no significant association found between orthostatic hypotension and its symptoms (dizziness and vertigo, vision problems, malaise, fatigue, poor concentration, neck stiffness), impact on standing or walking and non-communicable diseases. Falls were experienced by 27.5 % (33 patients) of the study population and prevalence of patients with orthostatic hypotension who had experienced falls was 25.9% (28 patients). In conclusions, orthostatic hypotension is more prevalent among elderly patients, but It wasn't associated with symptoms, and non-communicable diseases, or as a risk factor for falls in elderly.

Keywords : orthostatic hypotension, elderly falls, emergency geriatric, Sri Lanka

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