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PREDICTORS OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE IN ADULTS, ELDERLY AND VERY ELDERLY IN SOUTHERN BRAZIL: A POPULATION-BASED STUDY

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Background: The association of hypertension, diabetes mellitus, sedentary lifestyle and obesity with CVD in elderly and very elderly individuals is controversial and has been poorly described.

Objectives: The aim of this study was to evaluate the association of risk factors for cardiovascular disease with clinical disease in adults (40-59 years), elderly (60-69 years) and very elderly (≥70 years) of a representative sample of the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Methods: A cross-sectional population-based study identified individuals through a multistage sampling. Data on socio-demographic, lifestyle, and health history were collected through a standardized questionnaire. Four blood pressure measurements were carried out using an oscillometric monitor, and anthropometric measurements were taken in duplicate. Hypertension was diagnosed by blood pressure ≥140/90 mmHg or use of BP-lowering drugs. Central obesity was determined by waist circumference ≥ 102 (men) or 88 (women) cm, and body mass index categorized as <25.0, 25.0 to 29.9, and ≥ 30.0 kg/m2. Diabetes was defined by previous medical diagnosis and/or use of anti-diabetic drugs. Cardiovascular disease was identified by medical history of myocardial infarction, coronary artery bypass grafting or percutaneous coronary intervention, heart failure (HF), or stroke.

Results: A total of 1210 participants were interviewed, being 611 adults, 300 elderly and 299 very elderly individuals. Cardiovascular disease was identified in 6.9% of adults, 17.3% of the elderly and 28.8% of the very elderly. Among adults, hypertension was the highest predictor of CVD (RR=7.8; 95%CI: 3.4-18.2; P<0.001). Among elderly aged 60 to 69 years, male gender (RR=1.9; 95%CI: 1.1-3.3; P=0.03), overweight (RR=2.3; 95%CI= 1.0-5.2; P=0.05), and diabetes mellitus (RR=2.3; 95%CI: 1.2-4.4; P=0.008) were independently associated with CVD. In the very elderly, physical inactivity (RR=1.8; 95%CI: 1.2-2.6; P=0.003), overweight (RR=2.2; 95%CI: 1.2-4.0; P=0.02) and obesity (RR=1.9; 95%CI95 1.0-3.6; P=0.02) were significantly associated with CVD, and there was a trend for hypertension (RR=1.9; 95%CI: 0.9-4.0; P=0.08).

Conclusion: In conclusion, hypertension was the highest predictor of CVD in adults. Among the elderly, male gender, overweight and diabetes were associated with CVD. Even in the very elderly it was possible to identify physical inactivity, overweight and obesity as independent risk factors for CVD.

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