



# WHL · NEWSLETTER

News from the World Hypertension League (WHL).  
A division of the International Society of Hypertension, and in official relations with the World Health Organization.

No. 107, June 2006

## Editorial

### Hypertension – A worldwide Epidemic: What can we do?



Dr. Arun Chockalingam

World Health Report 2002 identified hypertension or high blood pressure as the third ranked factor for disability adjusted life years [1]. Hypertension is one of the primary risk factors for heart disease and stroke, the leading cause of death worldwide.

Recent analysis show that as of 2000 there are 972 million people living with hypertension worldwide and it is estimated that this number will escalate to more than 1.5 billion in 2025 [2]. Nearly two thirds of this hypertensive population lives in low and middle income countries resulting in a huge economic burden.

Awareness, prevention, treatment and control of hypertension is a significant public health measure. Although measurement of blood pressure is a simple procedure it is not done properly by healthcare professionals all around the world. Patient adherence to advice on lifestyle modification measures and drug therapy is not optimal in every part of the world. The result is more than 50% of the hypertensive population are unaware of their condition; of those who are aware more than 50% have not been treated. Among those who were treated the control rate is around 12-25% in different countries.

Increasing levels and prevalence of hypertension can not be ignored as ‘individual’s problem’. Uncontrolled hypertension is a major cause of premature death and disability throughout the world [3] with significant impact on individuals and health care system. This translates to an increasing economic and a high societal burden. Thus it is a societal problem and the solutions also must be societal [4].

*continued on page 2*

## New WHL Member

The Executive Board admitted the **Georgian Hypertension Study Society** and the **Latin American Society of Hypertension (LASH)** into WHL membership.

The WHL welcomes the new members and will do everything to make their membership a fruitful experience.

For mailing address of the new members, please see people section on page 4.



Countries with WHL Membership (marked in red)

The total number of WHL members has thus increased to 83. ■

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To address awareness, treatment and control the World Hypertension League (WHL), through its national member societies, launched World Hypertension Day in 2005. Due to its success throughout the world, WHL made it as an annual event. The 2006 World Hypertension Day (WHD) was planned and executed during the week of May 8-13 in most WHL member countries with May 13, 2006 being the actual World Hypertension Day. The theme for this year is “*Treat to Goal*” with a clear intent to ensure patient adherence and control of hypertension worldwide. WHD serves as an effective vehicle to mobilize local, regional, national and international interest and to influence policy makers at the national government level. The WHL is very pleased that many of the national leagues/societies actively participated on WHD this year. We look forward to our continuing collaboration to quell this modern epidemic in every country.



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**References:**

1. World Health Report 2002: Reducing risks, promoting healthy life. WHO, Geneva 2002.
2. Kearney PM, Whelton M, Reynolds K, Whelton PK, He J. Global burden of hypertension: analysis of worldwide data. *Lancet* 2005; **365**: 217-23.
3. WHO Global Report: Preventing chronic diseases: A vital investment. WHO, Geneva 2005.
4. Rose G. Sick individuals and sick population. *Int J Epidemiol* 1985; **14**:32-8. ■

**WHL News**

**World Hypertension Day 2005**

The **Slovenia Hypertension Society (SHS)** undertook various activities before and at the 2005 World Hypertension Day (WHD) with the goal to be present in the public media as much as possible. In the following, some of the activities are described.

The campaign began several days before the official WHD with a conversation of Dr. Rok Accetto, president of the SHS, on a local commercial television station in the capital Ljubljana. Several important points about detection, evaluation, blood pressure measurements and hypertension treatment were addressed.



The next event was a meeting of general practitioners on May 13th, sponsored by a pharmaceutical company. Several aspects of hypertension were discussed there – not only from the theoretical point. Approximately one-third of medical doctors present at the meeting decided to participate in the 2 km walk test, which is often recommended to patients as a simple procedure to establish their physical fitness, but rarely performed on medical workers themselves. An attempt to collect, analyze and present the data was made during the last scientific presentation of the day. Several participants were quite satisfied and even impressed by their own active involvement in the test. They pointed out the importance of practical knowledge and experience when advising behavior changes to their patients.

The outline of the specific program at the meeting is shown below:

- Importance of blood pressure management (*R. Accetto*)
- How and when to combine antihypertensive drugs (*J. Brguljan-Hitij*) *continued on page 3*

*WHD 2005 from Slovenia continued*

- Diuretics in hypertension (J. Dobovisek)
- Non-pharmacological measures and the elevated blood pressure (B. Salobir)
- Importance of physical activity in hypertension (B. Kolsek)
- Motivation of patient for chronic therapy (T. Tacnik)
- Blood pressure measurement and 2 km walk test – today's results (P. Dolenc)

On May 14, 2005, several activities in the major cities of Slovenia were organized – e.g., Ljubljana, Maribor, Novo Mesto. In the major walking zones or parks, blood pressure measurements were performed by nurses and technicians. In addition to some short interviews of the Slovenian Hypertension Society members, several cultural events took place. Dancers were performing modern dances to stress the importance of physical activity. Also, several comedy sketches were carried out by our popular female actor acting as a nurse. The program was guided by a professional speaker. More than 600 blood pressure measurements were taken in Ljubljana during the event between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Colorful balloons with printed blood pressure values were handed out freely, and we ran out of stock.



The happening was noted by the two main television networks in Slovenia – on the national broadcast network and a commercial station. Presentations of the events were shown during the main news of both networks. Several days after the first WHD another telephone interview about hypertension was performed alive on the local radio station. Some short notes about hypertension and the meaning of WHD are published on our internet site <http://www.hipertenzija.org> and several other Slovenian internet sites.



Our member, Dr. Jana Brguljan-Hitij, was the main organizer of public events for this occasion. We estimate that the WHD was a significant event in Slovenia. This and similar events help in public awareness of elevated blood pressure and its concealed and ominous dangers. In addition, the Slovenia Society of Hypertension plans to perform an epidemiological study to determine the prevalence of hypertension, its awareness and treatment in different parts of Slovenia. The study is scheduled to start this year.

Dr. Primoz Dolenc  
Secretary  
Slovenian Hypertension Society



#### **Resummon: Submission of WHD reports**

Last month on May 13, the second World Hypertension Day (WHD) was observed. Like last year, in many countries around the globe activities were developed and implemented to increase awareness of hypertension and to improve hypertension control. In order to document the wide variety of activities and for making this information available to others, the WHL encourages all its members to submit brief reports about their WHD activities, including photographs and samples of developed material. It is planned to present selected reports in the WHL Newsletter and to make all of them available on our homepage.

Dr. Anja Kroke  
Editor



## People

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### Impressum

The objectives of the WHL are to promote the detection, control and prevention of arterial hypertension in populations. The World Hypertension League (WHL) is a federation of leagues, societies and other national bodies devoted to this goal. Individual membership is not possible. The WHL is a division of the International Society of Hypertension (ISH), and is in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO).

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Arun Chockalingam (Burnaby), Secretary General

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## Calendar

### World Congress of Cardiology 2006

September 2–6, 2006  
Barcelona, Spain

*Information:* World Heart Federation  
5, avenue du mail, 1205 Geneva, Switzerland  
Fax: (+41-22) 807 0337  
E-mail: congress@worldheart.org

### 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Conference and Scientific Sessions of the Council for High Blood Pressure Research with Workshop on Sex Hormones, Gender and Hypertension

October 4–7, 2006  
San Antonio, TX, USA

*Information:* AHA  
7272 Greenville Avenue  
Dallas, TX 75231, USA  
E-mail: scientificconferences@heart.org

### World Congress on Controversis in Obesity, Diabetes and Hypertension (CODHy)

October 26–29, 2006  
Berlin; Germany

*Information:* ComtecMed  
Medical Congresses  
53 Rothschild Boulevard, PO Box 68  
Tel Aviv, 61000, Israel  
Fax: (+972-3) 5666177  
E-mail: info@comtecmed.com

### Hypertension Update XVIII

October 30–31, 2006  
Stratford upon Avon, UK

*Information:* Hampton Medical Conferences  
113-119 High Street, Hampton Hill  
Middlesex, TW12 1NJ, UK  
Fax: (+44-20) 8979 6700  
Website: <http://www.hamptonmedical.com>

### 22<sup>nd</sup> Scientific Meeting of the International Society of Hypertension and 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the European Society of Hypertension

June 14–19, 2008  
Berlin, Germany

*Information:* ISH Secretariat  
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