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Hypertension in the young and old

The two articles that follow span the spectrum of age in addressing hypertension, the most common public health problem in our society today. First, Dr. Ben Brouhard reviews the approach to hypertension in children and adolescents. While the prevalence of hypertension in children is low, the likelihood of finding a secondary cause is considerably greater than in adults. In contrast, Dr. Ray W. Gifford, Jr, reviews the much more widespread problem of hypertension in the elderly. It is estimated that more than 65% of those over age 65 have sustained hypertension.

Life-style modification can be important in both

young and elderly patients, although the potential for preventing high blood pressure may be greater in young patients with high-normal or borderline hypertension. We rely upon the same drugs for treatment in both patient groups, but the indications and cautions for their use may be quite different for each age extreme. Regardless of the age group affected, however, hypertension deserves thorough evaluation, and when indicated, aggressive therapy. I hope you enjoy these two excellent reviews.

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