

Hypertension in east Africans and others of African descent: a review.

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Abstract:

As the number of fatalities from cardiovascular diseases declines in western industrial nations, an opposite trend is observed in the East African region. Inter-regional variations in the prevalence of vascular disorders have been attributed to socioeconomic, psychosocial and heritable physiological parameters. Although faulty mineralocorticoid metabolism and the dysfunctional kidney are prominent features of circulatory problems, many current studies are focused on membrane receptors, transmembrane ion transport mechanisms, ion channels and the possible genetic polymorphisms that determine the characteristics of those molecular structures in the vascular system of normal or hypertensive persons. In this review, a composite of the data available on each of the above parameters and its significance in the pathogenesis of hypertension in the industrial West and transforming economies of East Africa is presented.