Detection of masked hypertension in community pharmacies in Andalusia

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**Background** Masked hypertension (MHT) is defined as the presence of isolated normal blood pressure (BP) values in individuals not undergoing antihypertensive therapy who turn out to show hypertension values when these values are determined by ambulatory BP monitoring (ABPM). The phenomenon of MHT occurs with high frequency in the population and is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular events.

**Purpose** To determine the prevalence of masked hypertension (MHT) among the population attending pharmacies in Andalusia, confirmed with 24-hour ABPM.

**Method** A cross-sectional observational study performed in community pharmacies in Andalusia registered in the accreditation programme of the MAPAfarma project promoted by the Andalusian Council of Professional Associations of Pharmacists (CACOF), carried out between June 2015 and June 2017.

**Findings** Out of the total of 1170 patients included in the MAPAfarma project, 522 (44.62%) were not undergoing treatment. Valid data were obtained for 501 of them, 298 (59.48%) were women and their mean age was 47.21 years (SD = 12.77 [max: 81?min: 20]. Of the 347 users, without antihypertensive treatment, in whom normal values were obtained in the isolated blood pressure measurement, 93 showed values considered high in 24-hour ABPM. It was therefore observed that 26.80% (CI 95%, 21.63?32.83) of normotensive patients with normal values in an isolated reading had masked hypertension.

**Conclusion** Approximately one in every four patients (26.80%) not undergoing antihypertensive therapy gave a normal value in an isolated office BP reading and were later considered as hypertensive, after ABPM was performed in Andalusian community pharmacies.