

## Triple drug therapy to manage uncontrolled BP in hypertensive patients during Covid-19 lockdown: perspectives from India

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**Background:** Reportedly, hypertension (HTN) independently increases the risk of Covid-19 severity and doubles the risk of Covid-19 mortality. Also, individuals with untreated HTN remain at high risk of covid-19 complications in comparison to those managed with antihypertensive treatment.

**Objective:** The survey was carried out to seek the opinion of healthcare practitioners (HCPs) on the impact of Covid-19 lockdown on the blood pressure (BP) control, and the role of triple drug therapy in management of uncontrolled BP.

**Method:** This PAN India study was carried out through a structured web-based objective questionnaire survey involving 479 HCPs. The survey comprised questions related to the prevalence and causes of uncontrolled BP during the Covid-19 lockdown, and the use of triple drug therapy in the management of uncontrolled BP.

**Results:** The respondent pool of 479 HCPs consisted of consulting physicians (51.5%), family physicians (19%), diabetologists (15%), cardiologists (14%) and nephrologists (0.5%). In this study a majority (40%) of HCPs agreed that stress was the most common reason behind uncontrolled BP during Covid-19 lockdown followed by non-compliance of treatment and sedentary lifestyle, each opined by 30% of HCPs. Almost 54% and 40% of the HCPs respectively, mentioned that 10-40% and 40-80% of their patients with hypertension have reported uncontrolled BP levels following the Covid-19 lockdown. 4% of the HCPs reported that all of their patients lost BP control, while 2% of HCPs mentioned that none of their patients reported uncontrolled BP after the Covid-19 lockdown. Of all the HCPs, 12% opined that they will choose a triple drug combination (TDC) for patients uncontrolled with high dose monotherapy, ~75% opined that they will chose TDC for patients uncontrolled with dual therapy while 13% mentioned that they will chose TDC for patients at high risk. Regarding the TDC of choice, more than half (51%) of the HCPs opted for Telmisartan + Amlodipine + Hydrochlorothiazide as the preferred combination. Among other TDCs, Telmisartan + Amlodipine + Chlorthalidone, Telmisartan + Cilnidipine + Chlorthalidone, and Olmesartan + Amlodipine + Hydrochlorothiazide were ranked as the next three choices opted by 28%, 17.5% and 2.5% of HCPs for the management of uncontrolled BP. A majority of HCPs (58%) also agreed that they would adopt TDC early in the treatment, during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

**Conclusion:** This study underlined the negative impact of Covid-19 lockdown on the blood pressure control in patients with hypertension. It also highlighted the HCPs perspectives on the early use of TDC, and that Telmisartan + Amlodipine + Hydrochlorothiazide is the most commonly preferred TDC in patients with uncontrolled BP levels in Indian settings.