

# TAKE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE TO HEART

A national health education campaign on hypertension by French pharmacists

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ÉDUCATION ET PRÉVENTION  
POUR LA SANTÉ

Hypertension (HTA) was chosen as the topic for this particular health education campaign launched by pharmacists because of the following reasons:

- the major public health issue represented by HTA
- a lack of public awareness of HTA as a risk factor for cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases - confirmed by a survey carried out in December 2005 by the French Council of Pharmacists
- the poor rates of HTA detection and control (several million hypertensive French people are estimated to be non diagnosed or non treated for HTA; only 1/3 of treated patients are estimated to have normalized blood pressure)
- the publication of national antihypertension guidelines by the French Health Authorities in October 2005.

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## REALISATIONS

### Setting up of a scientific committee

The scientific committee of the campaign included experts in cardiology (French Society of Hypertension, French Committee against Hypertension, French Federation of Cardiology), experts in patient education and pharmacists. The objectives of the scientific committee were to validate all the information regarding HTA and to contribute to the designing of the campaign's tools.

### Professional information on hypertension

In accordance with the French guidelines on hypertension care, a technical memo was published by the Health and Social Education Committee for French Pharmacy (Cespharm).

This memo included information on:

- blood pressure measurements with a special focus on self-measurement
- lifestyle recommendations: diet/nutrition, exercise, weight reduction, smoking cessation...
- proper use of antihypertensive drugs
- strategies to improve blood pressure control
- Follow-up of hypertensive patients



This technical memo was distributed to all French pharmacists with the journal of the National Council of pharmacists in January 2006.

### Conception of tools for pharmacists

Specific tools were designed with the help of the scientific committee:

- posters and badges showing pharmacists' involvement in this campaign
- leaflets to help pharmacists in their educational role toward patients and the public:



2 different leaflets were designed and tested on groups of hypertensive and non hypertensive patients.

#### ■ A leaflet for the general public

This leaflet includes general information on HTA (definition, risk factors, prevention and detection of HTA) to increase public awareness on HTA.



## ■ A leaflet to be given to hypertensive patients

This leaflet focuses on the different levels of the pharmacist's intervention in the hypertensive patient education:

- proper use of antihypertensive drugs
- adherence to treatment
- recommended lifestyle changes: diet/nutrition, exercise, tobacco cessation...
- home blood pressure measurement

### **Distribution of the communication tools**

Communication kits composed of 2 posters, 5 badges and 50 copies of each leaflet, were sent to the 23,000 French pharmacies in January 2006.

→ **46,000 posters, 115,000 badges and 2,3 million leaflets sent to French pharmacists in January 2006**

## **ASSESSMENT**

A questionnaire was sent in March 2006 to all pharmacists which helped gather their opinions and evaluate their involvement in the campaign.

3,500 questionnaires were sent back to the French Council of Pharmacists and their analysis showed:

→ **Great satisfaction of pharmacists**

80% of pharmacists found their profession was well represented in the campaign and 83% that the campaign emphasized their role in health education.

→ **A high level of participation of community pharmacists**

91% of pharmacists reported they had participated in the campaign and all of them had used posters and leaflets.

70% of pharmacists reported the campaign had encouraged exchanges about HTA especially concerning self blood pressure measurement (22%), follow-up of patients (12%), lifestyle recommendations (16%), HTA detection (14%) and risk factors (15%).

## **CONCLUSION**

This campaign was implemented within the framework of a partnership between all organizations representing French community pharmacists, with the full support of learned societies involved in cardiology.

The evaluation data highlight the great satisfaction of pharmacists and public concerning this campaign and underline the pharmacist's involvement in the patient education about hypertension.

The campaign "*Take your blood pressure to heart*" has been designed as the first step of several campaigns intended to strengthen the image of the pharmacist and to promote his competence among the public.

### **Contact**

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