Objective. To determine family physicians' (FP) use of the recommended non-pharmacological treatment (NPT) for hypertension.

Design. Cross-sectional survey. Setting. Primary care practices in rural and urban areas. Participants. Patients with hypertension from 30 urban and rural practices. Measurements. We recorded the prescription of NPT (weight loss, alcohol and salt intake reduction, diet, physical activity, and smoking cessation). If the measure was not applicable, it was recorded as such. Data were analyzed with SPSS.15.0. Results. We included 150 patients, 70 (46.7%) males. Mean (SD) age was 65.5 (10.2) years, and 50% resided in urban areas. 77.5% of the above measures were recommended, 98% of the patients were receiving some counselling and 42% received counselling on all the indicated measures. There were no significant differences between urban and rural doctors, or according to the sex or age of the physicians. Counselling was more common in younger patients (Spearman -0.28, p< 0.001). A regression analysis considering the degree of counselling as the dependent variable showed a significant association of counselling with patient age (t=−2.9, p=0.04). Conclusions. Non-pharmacological treatment for hypertension could be increased in the Primary Care setting. Older people were less likely to be given relevant counselling. There were no differences as regards FP rural/urban practice, sex or age.

Keywords
Hypertension, Life Style, Health Education