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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-59576

Title: Does White Coat Hypertension End with Hypertension? A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.

Recommendation:

Accept as it is .....
✓ Accept after minor revision.....
Accept after major revision .....
Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance	✓			

Reviewer Name: Dr S. K. Nath

Detailed Reviewer's Report

Strength of the study:

- Addresses an important clinical question concerning the progression of white-coat hypertension.
- Includes a systematic review of 24 observational studies.
- Searches multiple electronic databases and registers the review protocol.
- Uses PRISMA guidance and the QUIPS tool for risk-of-bias assessment.
- Reports pooled risk estimates with confidence intervals.
- Examines differences in diagnostic methods and follow-up duration.
- Discusses potential confounding and the limitations of observational evidence.
- Highlights the importance of regular out-of-office blood pressure monitoring.

Weakness of the study:

- Considerable heterogeneity affects the primary pooled analysis.
- Definitions of white-coat and sustained hypertension vary between studies.
- Some included studies have small samples or limited follow-up.
- The eligibility of studies using different outcome definitions requires clarification.
- Potential overlap between cohorts and publications needs verification.
- The use of fixed-effect models for adjusted estimates requires stronger justification.
- Subgroup and sensitivity analyses need clearer reporting.
- Numerous spacing, grammatical and reference-formatting errors affect presentation.

Reviewers Comments:

The manuscript examines an important clinical question and presents a systematic review and meta-analysis of the progression from white-coat hypertension to sustained hypertension. The authors report a pooled risk ratio of 2.52, indicating a higher risk among individuals with white-coat hypertension than among normotensive controls. The use of multiple databases, protocol registration and risk-of-bias assessment strengthens the study. However, the primary analysis has substantial heterogeneity ($I^2 = 85\%$), which requires more detailed investigation. The authors should verify that all pooled studies meet the eligibility criteria and measure comparable progression outcomes. Potential overlap between cohorts, differences in follow-up duration and the inclusion of studies with varying diagnostic definitions should be addressed. The rationale for using fixed-effect models in the adjusted analyses also requires clarification. The authors should provide clearer sensitivity analyses and ensure that conclusions reflect the uncertainty in the evidence. Ethical approval is generally not required for a review of published studies, but the relevant declaration should be included. Extensive language editing and reference verification are also necessary. Overall, the manuscript has potential clinical value but requires substantial methodological clarification before publication.

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Previously Published anywhere/Plagiarism check:
A web search did not identify an exact match for the submitted title. However, white-coat hypertension and its progression to sustained hypertension have been examined in earlier longitudinal studies and reviews. For example, the Finn-Home study investigated progression to sustained hypertension, while published reviews have discussed the natural history and clinical significance of white-coat hypertension. The topic therefore overlaps with established literature, but this does not establish plagiarism. The authors should clearly explain the added value of this meta-analysis, verify the accuracy of all references and check for overlapping datasets. A formal similarity check is recommended before acceptance.