

# Main strategies adopted by nurses in promoting self-care among hypertensive patients: an integrative review

**RESUMO** | Objetivo: analisar as publicações científicas nacionais e internacionais sobre as principais estratégias adotadas pelos enfermeiros para promover o autocuidado no controle da hipertensão arterial. Método: Trata-se de uma revisão integrativa da literatura a partir de uma busca nas bases de dados PubMed, SciELO, BDNF e LILACS, para identificação de estudos publicados entre os anos de 2012 a 2022. Resultados: Oito estudos foram incluídos na amostra, após seleção de acordo com os critérios de inclusão e exclusão. Identificou-se três categorias: Educação em saúde como ferramenta para o autocuidado do hipertenso; Importância da capacitação do profissional enfermeiro no autocuidado do hipertenso e da visita domiciliar como ferramenta para o autocuidado relacionado à adesão ao tratamento anti-hipertensivo. Conclusão: Os enfermeiros desempenham importante papel na promoção do autocuidado entre hipertensos, principalmente por meio da educação em saúde e visitas domiciliares, atuando nas principais necessidades apontadas por estes.

**Descritores:** Cuidados de enfermagem; Hipertensão; Autocuidado.

**ABSTRACT** | Objective: to analyze national and international scientific publications on the main strategies adopted by nurses to promote self-care in the control of arterial hypertension. Method: This is an integrative literature review based on a search in the PubMed, SciELO, BDNF and LILACS databases, to identify studies published between 2012 and 2022. Results: Eight studies were included in the sample, after selection according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Three categories were identified: Health education as a tool for self-care for hypertensive patients; Importance of professional nursing training in self-care for hypertensive patients and home visits as a tool for self-care related to adherence to antihypertensive treatment. Conclusion: Nurses play an important role in promoting self-care among hypertensive patients, mainly through health education and home visits, acting on the main needs identified by them.

**Keywords:** Nursing care; Hypertension; Self-care.

**RESUMEN** | Objetivo: analizar publicaciones científicas nacionales e internacionales sobre las principales estrategias adoptadas por enfermeros para promover el autocuidado en el control de la hipertensión. Método: Se trata de una revisión integrativa de la literatura basada en una búsqueda en las bases de datos PubMed, SciELO, BDNF y LILACS, para identificar estudios publicados entre 2012 y 2022. Resultados: Ocho estudios fueron incluidos en la muestra, previa selección según los criterios de inclusión y exclusión. Fueron identificadas tres categorías: Educación en salud como herramienta para el autocuidado de los pacientes hipertensos; Importancia de la formación del profesional de enfermería en el autocuidado del hipertenso y visita domiciliar como herramienta para el autocuidado relacionado con la adherencia al tratamiento antihipertensivo. Conclusión: Enfermeros juegan un papel importante en la promoción del autocuidado entre los pacientes hipertensos, principalmente a través de la educación en salud y la visita domiciliar, actuando sobre las principales necesidades identificadas.

**Palabras claves:** Atención de enfermería; Hipertensión; Cuidados personales.

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## INTRODUCTION

Chronic noncommunicable diseases are responsible for thousands of deaths annually in Brazil and worldwide. They constitute a significant public health problem, being responsible for negative impacts on the quality of life of patients and their families, generating a tremendous economic impact on health systems.<sup>1</sup> Among the chronic diseases, Systemic Arterial Hypertension (SAH) stands out, characterized as an important global health problem by drastically increasing the risk of involvement by other cardiovascular diseases.<sup>2</sup>

SAH has several factors involved in its pathophysiology, being defined by sustained pressure values of 140 mmHg of systolic pressure per 90 mmHg of diastolic pressure, related to thousands of deaths annually.<sup>3</sup> Despite advances in their treatment, most patients do not reach adequate blood pressure (BP) values, factors often related to self-efficacy and self-care deficits and ineffective adherence to proposed therapeutic strategies.<sup>4-7</sup>

SAH, when not properly treated, promotes vascular damage and cardiac dysfunction. Among the complications resulting from SAH, heart failure, chronic renal failure, stroke, and coronary and peripheral artery disease stand out.<sup>8</sup>

In Brazil, the Ministry of Health (MS - Ministério da Saúde) instituted the Arterial Hypertension and Diabetes Program (HiperDia) to equip and organize care for patients with these pathologies. With regard to SAH, through HiperDia, the user has certain services guaranteed, such as free medication, medical and nursing consultations, referral to other specialists and complementary exams when requested. In addition, through HiperDia, it is possible to monitor the conditioning factors, allowing health professionals, such as nurses, to guide their prevention and control actions towards the needs highlighted.<sup>9</sup>

Due to the fact that SAH is a disease that is often asymptomatic, its diagnosis and treatment must be early to reduce

the probability of complications resulting from it. In this perspective, nurses play a fundamental role in strategies for the prevention, control and detection of hypertension, through educational actions and guidance on the various aspects of the disease and its treatment.<sup>3</sup>

According to Dorothea Orem's theory of nursing, self-care consists of activities that the individual can fully or partially maintain, restore or improve their health. Nursing care, when based on this theory, is directed at the care deficits experienced by patients to make them capable of taking care of themselves and improve self-efficacy, that is, the psychological factor related to the individual's ability to plan or carry out a proposed plan to achieve a specific objective. It is believed that high levels of self-efficacy are one of the components related to successful treatment of hypertension.<sup>10</sup>

Encouraging strategies that favor the promotion of self-care, including adherence to antihypertensive medication, adoption of a low-salt diet, regular physical activity of at least 30 minutes a day, weight reduction or control, cessation of alcohol intake and tobacco use, are shown to be important for the hypertensive public, as such strategies help control the disease, consequently reducing health expenses and morbidity and mortality due to complications generated by the uncontrolled disease.<sup>11</sup>

Given the above, the present study describes the main strategies adopted by nurses to promote self-care in the control of arterial hypertension. The question that guided this study was: what are the main strategies used by nurses to promote self-care for hypertensive patients?

## METHOD

This is an integrative literature review, which allows the use of different types of studies and enables a complete understanding of a given phenomenon. For its development, the following steps were

taken: (1) definition of the theme and guiding question; (2) definition of inclusion and exclusion criteria; (3) categorization of information to be extracted from studies; (4) assessment of included studies; (5) critical interpretation of results; and (6) synthesis of data obtained.<sup>12-13</sup>

The survey of studies was carried out in the following databases: National Center for Biotechnology Information (PubMed), Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), Nursing Database (BDNF) and Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences (LILACS). The guiding question built from the PICO strategy<sup>14</sup> (P - population; I - intervention; C - comparator; O - outcome), where the population (P): hypertensive; Intervention (I): strategies conducted by nurses; Comparison (C): not applicable; Outcome (O): promotion of self-care in hypertensive patients. The following question was considered: "What are the main strategies used by nurses to promote self-care in hypertensive patients?"

The search for evidence took place between October and December 2022. The descriptors: "Hypertension, nursing care and self-care" were used to survey the articles and were selected according to the Health Sciences Descriptors (DECS) and Medical SubjectHeading (MeSH) being combined through the Boolean Operator "AND".

Papers published from 2012 to 2022, available in full in peer-reviewed electronic databases in Portuguese and English, were included. Book chapters, dissertations and/or theses, duplicate articles, reviews, editorials, book/book chapters, reflective studies and those not related to the theme were excluded.

In order to refine the articles for the final composition of the sample, after applying the exclusion criteria, their titles and abstracts were read by two independent researchers. Then, the selected studies were read in full. To describe the search process, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) flow-

chart, adapted in this study, was used to guide the selection of studies.<sup>15</sup>

The selected studies were carefully and descriptively evaluated through the steps: (1) pre-analysis; (2) exploration and organization of discoveries; and (3) data processing and interpretation. Subsequently, the interpretation, synthesis and discussion of the results proceeded. In addition, the level of evidence of the included publications was adopted to establish parameters for reflection on the actions recommended in this study.<sup>17</sup>

Data tabulation and the elaboration of the information table characterized by title, authorship, year of publication, level of evidence, objective and main results, were developed with the help of Microsoft Office Excel and Word 2016 software, respectively.

As this is an integrative review study, it was not necessary to submit it for consideration by a Research Ethics Committee involving human beings, as determined by Resolution 466/2012 of the National Health Council. However, ethical issues were respected in the elaboration of this type of study, correctly referencing the studies used for its synthesis.

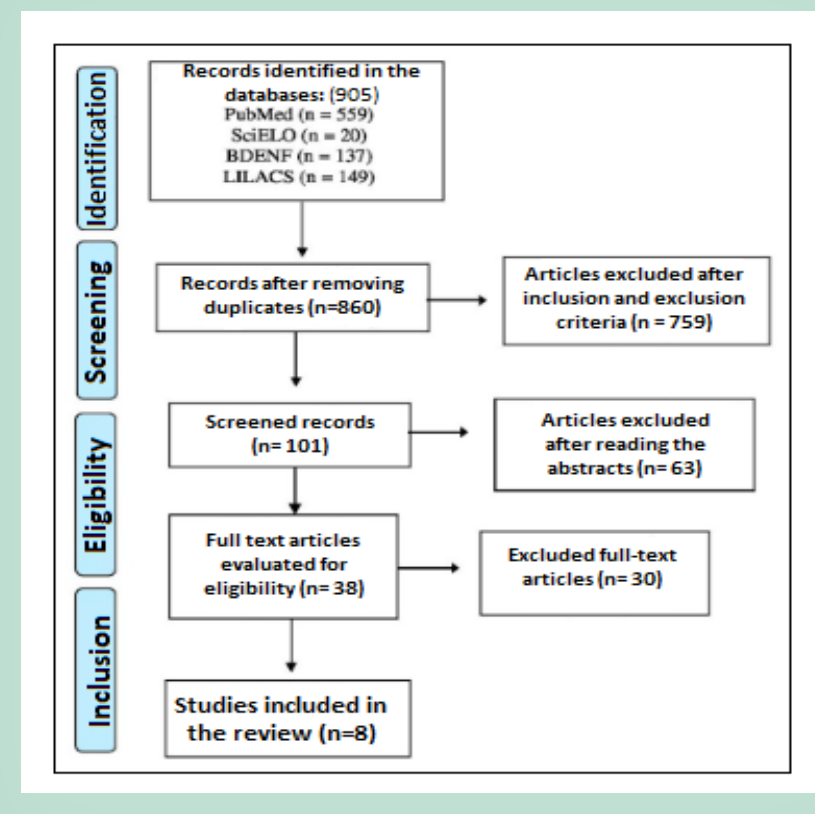
## RESULTS

The initial survey allowed the identification of 905 titles. Eight articles were selected and included in the sample because they met the criteria and proposed objective, as shown in Figure 1.

Among the places of publication, studies from the American, Asian and European continents were found, with emphasis on publications in 2013, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2020 and 2021. As for the method, 37.5% were based on randomized controlled clinical trials for their discussion (Chart 1).

After reading and analyzing the data, they were synthesized and distributed into three categories: A) Health education as a tool for self-care for hypertensive patients; B) the importance of training professional

**Figure 1 – Adaptation of the study selection flowchart for this integrative review (n=8), according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) model. Vitória-PE, Brazil, 2022.**



PubMed® - National Center for Biotechnology Information; LILACS - Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences; BDNF - Nursing Database; SciELO - Scientific Electronic Library Online. Source: Adapted from <sup>14</sup>. Source: adapted by the authors, 2022.

nurses for self-care for hypertensive patients; and C) Home visit as a self-care tool related to adherence to antihypertensive treatment (Chart 2). In category A, health

education was addressed in 4 studies as an essential tool to assist in the self-care of hypertensive patients. In category B, the training of nursing professionals was repor-

**Chart 1 - Distribution of articles according to location, year and method. (n=8). Vitória-PE, Brazil, 2022.**

Place	(n)	(f)
Europe	2	25%
North America	1	12,5%
South America	1	12%
Ásia	4	50%
Year of publication		
2013	1	12,5%
2015	2	12,5%
2016	1	12,5%
2018	1	12,5%

2020	2	12,5%
2021	1	25%
<b>Survey method used</b>		
Qualitative research	1	12,5%
Quasi-Experimental Study	1	12,5%
Randomized experimental study	1	12,5%
Non-equivalent comparison group	1	12,5%
Randomized clinical trial	2	25%
Pre and post group test	2	25%
Source: Research data, 2022.		

ted by some selected studies as a strategy to promote self-care for hypertensive patients. In category C, home visits were addressed in 2 studies as an intervention adopted by nurses to promote self-care for people with high blood pressure.

### DISCUSSION

This study analyzed the main strategies adopted by nurses to promote self-care in patients with SAH and the results showed three main strategies ba-

sed on health education, professional training and home visits.

Hypertension control is a complex event that requires the individual's active and daily participation. In this sense, evidence shows that implementing strategies that promote self-care in these patients with hypertension effectively reduces blood pressure and improves self-efficacy and medication adherence.<sup>1</sup>

From Figure 1, it is possible to observe that the nurse plays an essential role in the care of hypertensive patients. This fact is related to the performance, mainly in the promotion of self-care, through interventions aimed at guiding the correct use of antihypertensive drugs, adopting a healthy lifestyle and providing better results in disease control and the patient's quality of life.<sup>18,25</sup>

The literature has shown that the use of strategies through educational sessions

Chart 2 - Distribution of articles that addressed the main strategies used by nurses in promoting self-care for hypertensive patients, according to title, authors, year, objective and main aspects (n=8). Vitória-PE, Brazil, 2022.			
Distribution of articles that addressed the main strategies used by nurses in promoting self-care in hypertensive patients, according to title, authors, year, objective and key aspects.			
Category A: Health education as a tool for self-care for hypertensive patients			
Title, authors and years	Level of evidence	Objective	Main results
Interaction in clinical nursing teaching: reflections on care for people with arterial hypertension (A interação no ensino clínico de enfermagem: reflexos no cuidado à pessoa com hipertensão arterial)/Girão et al., 2015 <sup>18</sup>	V	To identify knowledge and attitudes in self-care in health among users who received clinical nursing education for hypertension	The health education strategy made it possible to increase the knowledge of hypertensive patients about the etiological factors, drug treatment and lifestyle habits related to hypertension.
The Effect of Self Care Education Based on Orem's Nursing Theory on Quality of Life and Self-Efficacy in Patients with Hypertension: A Quasi-Experimental Study /Khademian et al., 2020 <sup>19</sup>	III	To determine the effect of self-care education based on Orem's nursing theory on quality of life and self-efficacy in patients with hypertension	Improvement in the quality of life of patients with Hypertension, after the implementation of an educational plan for Dorothea Orem's self-care, led by nurses.
Effect of Electronic Health Record-Based Medication Support and Nurse-Led Medication Therapy Management on Hypertension and Medication Self-management: A Randomized Clinical Trial/ Pessel et al., 2018 <sup>20</sup>	II	Test medication management tools delivered through a commercial electronic health record with and without a nurse-led education intervention.	The electronic medical record combined with the educational intervention of medication self-management promoted by nurses in hypertensive patients reduced blood pressure and improved medication reconciliation

Patient-tailored self-management intervention for older adults with hypertension in a nursing home/Park et al., 2013 <sup>24</sup>	III	To evaluate the effects of a self-management intervention on blood pressure control and self-care behavior, exercise self-efficacy, and medication adherence among elderly Korean hypertensive patients in a nursing home.	Health education and counseling interventions performed by nurses in hypertensive patients were beneficial in reducing blood pressure, improving self-care, and greater self-efficacy in exercises.
<b>Category B: Importance of training professional nurses in the self-care of hypertensive patients</b>			
<b>Title, authors and year</b>	<b>Level of evidence</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Main results</b>
Assessment of hypertensive patients' self-care agency after counseling training of nurses/Drevenhom et al., 2015 <sup>21</sup>	II	Assess self-care of hypertensive patients and any correlation with patient lifestyle changes and degree of patient-centeredness after counseling training	Nurse training for hypertensive patient-centered counseling resulted in a higher level of self-care, participation in treatment, and willingness to control risk factors among hypertensive patients.
The effect of nurse-led telephone support on adherence to blood pressure control and drug treatment in individuals with primary hypertension: A randomized controlled study/Kes, Pollat, 2021 <sup>22</sup>	II	To evaluate the effect of telephone monitoring, in combination with texts, on medication adherence and blood pressure control in primary hypertension.	Training associated with telephone monitoring offered by nurses to groups of hypertensive patients on the correct way of measuring blood pressure, the complications of hypertension and the importance of adherence to treatment, promoted a positive effect on blood pressure control.
<b>Category C: Home visit as a tool for self-care related to adherence to antihypertensive treatment</b>			
<b>Title, authors and year</b>	<b>Level of evidence</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Main results</b>
The Impact of a Nurse-Led Home Visitation Program on Hypertension Self-Management among Older Community-Dwelling Koreans/Park, Kim, 2016 <sup>23</sup>	III	To examine the impact of a nurse-led home visiting program on self-management of hypertension among community-dwelling older Koreans.	Nursing interventions through home visits to hypertensive patients were able to improve individuals' knowledge about the disease, pressure monitoring, food management, medication adherence and self-confidence.
The evaluation of a nurse-led hypertension management model in an urban community healthcare: A randomized controlled trial/Miao et al., 2020 <sup>24</sup>	II	Establish and test the effectiveness of a nurse-led model of hypertension management in the community.	Home nursing interventions, providing guidance on changes in lifestyle habits, adjustments in medication schedules and residential BP monitoring, promoted a reduction in systolic and diastolic BP, and better control of risk factors in the hypertensive group.
Source: Research data, 2022.			

and health counseling, combined with the provision of educational materials addressing the definition of hypertension, its risk factors, complications, medications and side effects, the importance of adherence to pharmacological treatment, the importance of regular physical activity and the importance of regular medical visits to monitor blood pressure, were able to promote improvement in self-care, greater control of hypertension rates

and better adherence to drug therapy in hypertensive patients.<sup>8,21</sup>

In this sense, a study carried out with hypertensive patients demonstrated that the implementation of educational strategies was able to improve knowledge about carrying out correct self-measurement of blood pressure levels in the home environment, which could help in monitoring and controlling the disease.<sup>26</sup>

Among the interventions and actions

carried out by nursing evidenced in this study, home interventions, interventions and follow-up by telephone and those carried out in health units stand out.

Studies show that home nursing interventions, guiding changes in life habits, adjustments in medication schedules and home BP monitoring promoted a reduction in systolic and diastolic BP and better control of risk factors in the hypertensive group.<sup>23-24</sup>

“  
In addition, another study reported that training associated with telephone monitoring offered by nurses to groups of hypertensive patients, addressing the correct way to measure blood pressure, the complications of hypertension and the importance of adherence to treatment, promoted positive effects on blood pressure control.<sup>22</sup>  
”

In addition, nursing activities with these patients can occur through other strategies, such as the use of electronic tools and the implementation of self-care programs, such as the one based on Dorothea Orem's theory, to subsidize care for this public of patients. A randomized clinical trial conducted at community health centers in Chicago, Illinois, demonstrated that the use of electronic records by nurses, combined with the medication self-management educational intervention in hypertensive patients, reduced blood pressure and improved medication reconciliation.<sup>20</sup> As demonstrated, the implementation of an educational program for self-care, based on Dorothea Orem's nursing theory by nurses, was able to improve the quality of life of hypertensive patients.<sup>10,19</sup>

As demonstrated, the implementation of an educational program for self-care, based on Dorothea Orem's nursing theory by nurses, was able to improve the quality of life of hypertensive patients.<sup>27</sup>

This study has limitations, mainly related to the methodological characteristics of the included studies, not including gray literature studies, which restricted the possibility of identifying and including other studies, as well as the period from 2012 to 2022 was delimited as a temporal space to enable a broader and more robust search for evidence.

However, this study corroborates with implications for clinical nursing practice, as it reinforces the importance of interventions conducted by nurses in front of the public. However, the elaboration of new review studies is recommen-

ded, focusing on the investigation of such contributions in care, gender, age group and delimited socioeconomic conditions.

## CONCLUSION

The results obtained in the study showed that among the main strategies adopted by nurses to promote self-care for hypertensive patients, especially in the control of arterial hypertension, health education stands out as a useful tool through the expansion of knowledge about risk factors, drug treatment and life habits related to the disease; home visits, mainly related to follow-up and guidance on adherence to antihypertensive treatment, blood pressure control, dietary management and promotion of self-confidence, in addition to training provided by nurses to hypertensive patients on the correct way to self-measure blood pressure, complications caused by the disease and the importance of adherence to treatment.

As a result, strategies that improve the self-care and self-efficacy of these patients, such as those listed in this study, conducted by nurses, can contribute to the control of arterial hypertension, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. 🐦

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