Reviewer's report

Title: Ethnic differences in blood pressure among youth in Paramaribo, Suriname

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Reviewer: Bonita Falkner

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript reports on an observational study that compares blood pressure levels among adolescents representing four separate ethnic groups in Suriname. Two groups Creole and Maroon are of West Africa origin. The other two groups are of Asian origin; Hindustani from South Asia (India) and Javanese from East Asia (Indonesia). BP screening was conducted at school sites on a total sample of 885 adolescents. The data show an increase in BP associated with age, higher BP in boys than girls, and a strong association with BMI. Slight differences were detected between the ethnic groups in boys. Of interest is the differences in BP between Maroon and Creole, ethnic groups of African origins but with different lifestyles. There is a suggestion that the authors may have identified a heightened risk among the Asian groups wherein the BP levels were somewhat higher among these groups, whereas in adults it is the African origin groups that have higher rates of hypertension.

The authors could improve the manuscript by emphasizing the two novel findings in their study.

First, they identified a difference in BP level between Maroons and Creoles, the two groups of West African origin. More discussion should be provided (in Discussion section) as to what would be different about these two groups of common origin. Lifestyles is mentioned, but more information should be provided regarding diet and other lifestyles prior to the adolescents moving to the capital city to continue school.

Second, they identified higher BP among an East Asian group, which was unexpected due to the higher rates of hypertension among adults of African origin. Again more discussion should be provided, such as secular changes in lifestyle among the ethnic groups. In other words, has there been changes in lifestyles (or increasing BMI) between the adults and adolescents of the Asian group to explain the higher BP.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests