

Significant reductions in mortality shown using blood pressure-lowering treatment in very elderly

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Lowering the blood pressure of elderly patients could cut their total mortality by a fifth and their rate of cardiovascular events by a third, according to a new study presented today at the American College of Cardiology in Chicago and published simultaneously in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

The 3,845 patient Hypertension in the Very Elderly Trial (HYVET), which is coordinated by scientists from Imperial College London, is the largest ever clinical trial to look at the effects of lowering blood pressure solely in those aged 80 and over. Patients were given either a placebo or the diuretic indapamide slow release (SR) 1.5mg, with the addition of the ACE inhibitor perindopril in tablet form once a day.

The research shows that the benefits of treatment include a 21% ($p=0.02$) reduction in total mortality rate, a 39% ($p=0.05$) reduction in stroke mortality rate, a 64% (p

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