

Health fair referrals shown to help improve blood pressure among low-income immigrants

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UCLA researchers sought to compare how two different approaches to providing follow-up care to health fair participants impacted blood-pressure control.

The study looked at data on 100 middle-aged men and women from low-income immigrant communities in Los Angeles who had their blood pressure checked at a health fair. Some were assigned to a community nurse who held office hours at a church, provided patients with in-person counseling on lifestyle modification, and helped them make doctors appointments. Others were assigned to research assistants who aided them solely by phone in scheduling appointments with physicians. One-quarter of the participants had not been previously diagnosed with [hypertension](#).

The researchers found that while patients in both groups showed improvement in systolic blood pressure, those in the phone-assisted group had twice the improvement (an average 14 ± 15 mm drop) of those in the nurse group (an average 7 ± 15 mm drop). While it is unclear what caused the more pronounced short-term improvement in the phone-assisted group, researchers suspect these participants saw a physician sooner and had more adjustments to their medications within the four-month study period.

Assisting health fair participants with making an appointment to see a

doctor led to a significant improvement in [blood pressure](#). Health fairs can play a role in identifying people with treatable [chronic conditions](#) in low-income immigrant communities and can provide an opportunity to connect people with [medical care](#).

More information: The study appears in the current online edition of the Journal of General Internal Medicine.

Provided by University of California - Los Angeles

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