

High blood pressure control in United States continues to improve

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High blood pressure control continues to improve in the United States, with more than half of those with the condition now achieving readings below 140/90 millimeters of mercury (mm Hg), according to new research presented at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2014 and simultaneously published in the American Heart Association's journal *Hypertension*.

Using data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) between 2003 and 2012, researchers found:

- The percentage of patients with hypertension achieving optimal blood pressure (less than 120/80 mm Hg) rose from 13 percent to 27 percent.
- The percentage of patients attaining pre-hypertensive levels of blood pressure (between 120/80 mm Hg and 139/89 mm Hg) rose from 19 percent to 33 percent.

This data is from interviews with 9,255 adults with [high blood pressure](#), which was defined as the use of blood pressure medications or a reading of at least 140/90 mmHg.

"This is definitely good news," say the researchers, as increased hypertension control has reduced the numbers of heart attacks and strokes, and the number of deaths and hospitalizations due to heart disease.

However, the percentage of patients with high blood pressure that remains uncontrolled is 48 percent, far higher than the goal of 38 percent set for the federal Healthy People 2020 initiative.

To reach the goal, researchers said high blood pressure has to be a priority for everyone at every medical visit, including the clinician, the patient, the pharmacist, and other members of the healthcare team.

High blood pressure affects about one in three adults in the United States. While often creating no symptoms, the condition raises the risk for heart disease and stroke.

Provided by American Heart Association

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