

Low levels of hormone in African-Americans may increase hypertension

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Although hypertension is more common in African-Americans, they have significantly lower levels of a hormone produced in response to cardiac stress than white and Hispanic individuals, a finding that may indicate a target for prevention or treatment of heart disease, according to a study published today in *JACC: Heart Failure*.

Using data from the Dallas Heart Study, researchers assessed 3,148 patients and examined the association between race and ethnicity and levels of natriuretic peptides—which are hormones produced in response to increased cardiac wall stress common in conditions like [hypertension](#) and [heart failure](#).

African-Americans made up 51 percent of the study population and had the highest prevalence of hypertension at 41 percent. Despite the higher rate of hypertension among African-Americans, low natriuretic peptide levels were found more than twice as often compared to White individuals.

Researchers suggest that some African-American individuals may have a relative natriuretic peptide deficiency that predisposes to salt retention, hypertension, and cardiovascular risk. Consequently, natriuretic peptide deficiency may represent a target for prevention and treatment of [heart disease](#).

Provided by American College of Cardiology

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