

Misunderstanding of term 'Hypertension' impacts med use

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(HealthDay)—Misunderstanding of the term hypertension may impact antihypertensive medication use and adherence, according to a perspective piece published online July 7 in *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes*.

Noting that more than 50 percent of all individuals with hypertension remain in poor control, in spite of advances in treating hypertension, Barbara G. Bokhour, Ph.D., and Nancy R. Kressin, Ph.D., from the VA Boston Healthcare System, examined whether use of the term hypertension contributes to misunderstandings about the condition and its cause.

The researchers note that [patients](#) frequently misinterpret the term hypertension to mean too much tension. Together with the idea that stress causes [high blood pressure](#), patients may use [stress management](#) to

control hypertension, considering hypertension to be a psychological rather than a physiological condition. Furthermore, this misunderstanding may cause patients to underestimate the value of medications and [medication adherence](#).

"We therefore suggest that clinicians reconsider the use of the term hypertension and the ways in which they explain the condition to patients," the authors write. "Reorienting the language to the more patient-centered term of high blood pressure may help patients better understand the condition and to more readily embrace the available efficacious therapies."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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