

# AHA: patient engagement linked to drop in blood pressure

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(HealthDay)—A higher level of achievements earned on a gamification system is associated with a reduction in blood pressure, according to a study presented at the American Heart Association's Council on Hypertension 2015 Scientific Sessions, held from Sept. 16 to 19 in Washington, D.C.

Khan Siddiqui, M.D., from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and Ross Goglia, M.B.A., from [higi](#) in Chicago, examined the correlation between ambulatory blood pressure and [patient engagement](#) with a nationwide ambulatory blood pressure kiosk network. Data from the network was analyzed from September 2012 to May 2015. The level of engagement was defined as the total number of achievements earned on a gamification platform. A total of 153,092 patients were included in the

study (mean age, 52 years; 49 percent obese).

The researchers found that patients earned a total of 898,130 achievements on the gamification system. The number of achievements earned by patients correlated with a significant difference in the drop in systolic and [diastolic blood pressure](#). The average drops in systolic and diastolic [blood pressure](#) were 16.2 and 10.6 mm Hg, respectively, for patients with more than 20 achievements. Most [patients](#) (84.8 percent) earning more than 20 achievements moved from a classification of hypertension to normotension.

"What we found in our study confirms what many have felt intuitively: when individuals are armed with their health data, they can make meaningful improvements in their health that may lead to lasting behavior change," Siddiqui said in a statement.

The authors are employed by high5, which funded the study.

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