

Hypertension – optimal blood pressure is 120/80. persistent elevation of blood pressure above 140/90 is considered elevated blood pressure or hypertension. 66 million American have hypertension and of these only 63% are aware their diagnosis but only 45% are receiving treatment and only 34% are under control.

Annual screening for hypertension is recommended for patients over age 50, patients with family history as well as high risk patients [overweight, smoker, diabetics]

For 85% to 95% of people with high blood pressure, the cause of their high blood pressure is not known. Called primary hypertension, this condition probably results from a variety of causes.

High Blood Pressure Risk factors

Age and Sex. The risk of developing high blood pressure increases as you age. Most cases of high blood pressure are diagnosed in men, until the age of 45. From age 45 to 54, men and women are equally at risk for high blood pressure. After the age of 54, women are actually more likely to have high blood pressure than men.²

Family History. People with relatives who have high blood pressure are more likely to develop high blood pressure.²

Ethnicity. People of African American and Native American ethnicity have very high rates of high blood pressure. Compared with Caucasians, African Americans develop hypertension earlier in life, and their average blood pressures are much higher.²

Hispanics have a higher ratio of diabetes and obesity compared with Caucasians, and have additional risk factors for developing hypertension.

Diet. People who regularly eat foods that are high in salt are more susceptible to high blood pressure.²

Obesity. People who are overweight are at risk for many illnesses, including high blood pressure.²

Stress. Studies have shown that people with heightened anxiety, intense anger, and suppressed expression of anger were more at risk of developing high blood pressure

DASH diet [dietary approaches to stop hypertension] is recommended to improve blood pressure.

<http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/>

www.webmd.com

<http://www.mypyramidtracker.gov/planner/>