

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a risk factor for a number of conditions, including heart disease and stroke. It is defined as a systolic blood pressure (during heartbeats) of 140 mmHg or higher, a diastolic blood pressure (between heartbeats) of 90 mmHg or higher, or current use of blood pressure-lowering medication. In 2005–2008, about 30 percent of both women and men were identified as having high blood pressure. This includes about 14 percent of adults with controlled hypertension, who had a normal blood pressure measurement and reported using blood pressure-lowering medication, and about 16 percent with uncontrolled hypertension, who

had a high blood pressure measurement with or without the use of medication. High blood pressure can also be controlled by losing excess body weight, participating in regular physical activity, and adopting a healthy diet with lower sodium intake.¹⁸

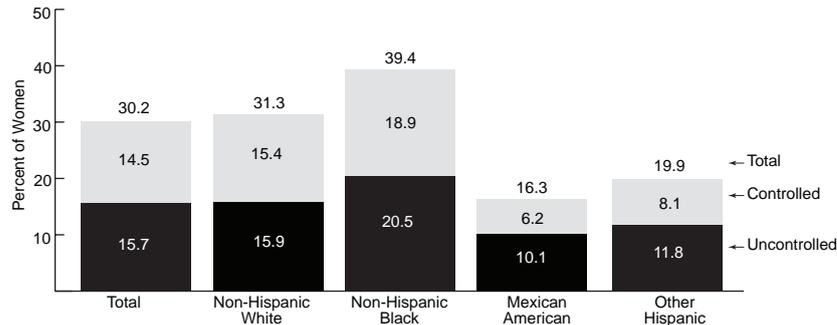
The prevalence of hypertension varies by race and ethnicity. For example, 39.4 percent of non-Hispanic Black women had high blood pressure compared to 16.3 percent of Mexican American women.

Among women with uncontrolled high blood pressure in 2005–2008, 54.4 percent had been previously diagnosed by a health professional and were taking medication for the condition; 11.9

percent had been previously diagnosed but were not taking medication; and 33.7 percent had never been diagnosed. Diagnosis status among women with uncontrolled high blood pressure varied by age as well as race and ethnicity. Younger women aged 18–44 were most likely to be undiagnosed (41.0 percent), while older women aged 65 and over were most likely to be diagnosed and taking medication (64.0 percent). With respect to race and ethnicity, Mexican American women with uncontrolled high blood pressure were most likely to be undiagnosed (45.6 percent), while non-Hispanic Black women were most likely to have been diagnosed and taking medication (61.3 percent; data not shown).

Women Aged 18 and Older with High Blood Pressure,* by Race/Ethnicity,** 2005–2008

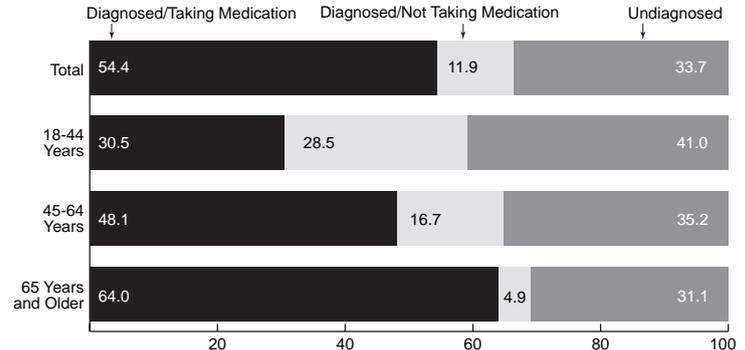
Source II.2: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey



*Includes a measured systolic pressure (during heartbeats) of 140mmHg or a diastolic blood pressure (between heartbeats) 90mmHg (uncontrolled hypertension, with or without blood pressure-lowering medication) and normal blood pressure (140/90mmHg) with reported current medication use (controlled hypertension). Percentages may not add to totals due to rounding. **The samples of American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and persons of multiple race were too small to produce reliable results.

Diagnosis Status* Among Women Aged 18 and Older with Uncontrolled High Blood Pressure,** by Age, 2005–2008

Source II.2: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey



*Reported whether they had ever been told by a health professional that they have high blood pressure and whether they were taking blood pressure-lowering medication. **Includes a measured systolic pressure (during heartbeats) of 140mmHg or a diastolic blood pressure (between heartbeats) 90mmHg.