

Get the facts on hypertension

The Heart Foundation's new hypertension guidelines provide the latest evidence on diagnosing and treating high blood pressure.

High blood pressure, or hypertension, remains the leading risk factor for heart disease. Uncontrolled high blood pressure can lead to a heart attack, stroke or kidney disease.

Despite these well-known facts, the management of high blood pressure remains a large national challenge. Close to six million adult Australians have hypertension, and many have no plan to manage or treat their condition.

The numbers on hypertension¹

- Close to six million adult Australians have hypertension (>140/90 or taking medication). This represents 33.7% of adult Australians.
- The prevalence of hypertension is higher for Australian males (35.3% or three million adult males) than females (32.3% or 2.9 million adult females).
- Adults in regional/rural Australia have a 27% higher rate of hypertension compared to residents in metro areas (38.6% vs. 30.5%).
- Hypertension increases with age, however, affects adult Australians at every age-range.
- Do these numbers reflect what you know about your patients?

Leading the way

New hypertension guidelines from the Heart Foundation provide healthcare professionals with the latest evidence on dealing with high blood pressure in patients. The guidelines have a primary and secondary prevention focus, and advice on out-of-clinic blood pressure measurement, white-coat hypertension and blood pressure variability.

The guidelines have been recommended by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and endorsed by Kidney Health Australia, National Stroke Foundation and the High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia.

The guidelines recommend:

- The management of patients with hypertension should also consider absolute cardiovascular disease risk
- Different treatment strategies for individuals at high risk of a cardiovascular event to those at low absolute cardiovascular disease risk, even if they have similar blood pressure readings
- Blood pressure-lowering therapy for patients with uncomplicated mild hypertension (systolic BP, 140–159 mmHg)
- The benefits of lower targets of < 120 mmHg systolic for patients with at least moderate cardiovascular risk (10-year risk, 20%)
- A healthy lifestyle, including not smoking, eating a nutritious diet and regular adequate exercise for all Australians.

Our guidelines and hypertension resources will help you work with your patients to manage their blood pressure for a healthy heart.

Find out more at heartfoundation.org.au/hypertension

¹Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Health Survey 2014/15