

CDC: Hypertension-related deaths on the rise in US

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Most marked increases seen in those aged 45 to 64 and those over 85.

(HealthDay)—The overall death rate from high blood pressure in the United States has increased 23 percent since 2000, even as the death rate from all other causes has dropped 21 percent, health officials reported Thursday.

That spike was seen in both genders and was most marked among those aged 45 to 64 and those over 85, according to a new report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"The age-adjusted deaths from high blood pressure went up, while the other causes of death went down," said report author Hsiang-Ching Kung, a statistician with CDC's National Center for Health Statistics.

From 2000 through 2013, the death rate from high blood pressure rose just over 58 percent for men aged 45 to 64 and increased almost 37 percent for women aged 45 to 64.

Those aged 85 and older were also not spared, with men seeing a 27.5 percent increase in the death rate from high blood pressure between 2000 and 2005, while women saw an increase of 23 percent in that same period. Between 2005 and

2013, those rates continued to increase, but more slowly, the researchers found.

Kung said this report cannot answer why these trends are occurring.

Dr. Gregg Fonarow, a professor of cardiology at the University of California, Los Angeles, said, "High blood pressure is a leading cause of heart attack, heart failure, stroke, kidney failure and premature heart-related death."

Despite decades of efforts to improve awareness, treatment and control of high blood pressure, there are gaps, variations and disparities that still exist, and large numbers of men and women are having fatal and nonfatal strokes and heart attacks that could have been prevented, Fonarow added.

"High-quality blood pressure management is complex and requires the engagement of patients, families, doctors, the health care systems and communities," Fonarow noted.

This effort includes expanding patient and health care provider awareness, appropriate lifestyle changes, access to care, workplace wellness programs, evidence-based treatment, a high level of adherence to taking medication, and adequate doctor follow-up, he said.

"There is a critical need to facilitate and incentivize improvement in blood pressure control and heart health, as well provide optimal patient care," Fonarow said.

Kung and co-author Dr. Jiaquan Xu, a CDC epidemiologist, also found that deaths related to high blood pressure varied by race. The death rate increased among Hispanics between 2000 and 2005. Since then, the death rate increased for whites but decreased among blacks, the researchers found.

Although the overall number of deaths related to high blood pressure was still higher among blacks than among whites and Hispanics, the gap between them narrowed, according to the report.

"The disparity is narrowing, but more studies are needed to see why that's the case," Kung said.

More information: [More Information](#)

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