

# Teens also at risk for organ damage from high blood pressure

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Organ damage from high blood pressure doesn't only occur in adults; it can also happen in teenagers, according to research presented today at the American Heart Association (AHA) Council on Hypertension, AHA

Council on Kidney in Cardiovascular Disease, American Society of Hypertension Joint Scientific Sessions 2017 in San Francisco.

And the damage to the heart and blood vessels can occur in youth at [blood pressure levels](#) that are below the clinical definition of hypertension in youth.

High blood pressure in youth is defined differently than it is in adults. In childhood, high blood pressure is based on percentiles, rather than blood pressure level. Researchers looked at whether [organ damage](#) in teens develops below the 95th percentile, which is the clinical definition of [high blood pressure](#) in youth.

Researchers studied blood pressure and measured organ damage in 180 teenagers (14-17 years old, 64 percent white, 57 percent males). They found evidence of organ damage even among the youth categorized as "normal" with blood pressure less than in the 80th percentile. They also found heart and vessel damage in the mid-risk group, which had blood pressures in the 80th to 90th percentiles and the high-risk group, with blood pressures above the 90th percentile.

"Some adolescents may have organ damage related to [blood](#) pressure and are not targeted for therapy," said Elaine M. Urbina, M.D., M.S., study author and director of preventive cardiology at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in Ohio. "Imaging of the heart may be useful in youth in the high-normal range of [blood pressure](#) to determine how aggressive therapy should be."

Provided by American Heart Association

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