



Health Awareness

Controlling Hypertension Requires A Commitment From Both Physicians And Their Patients

(NAPSA)—High blood pressure, or hypertension, impacts approximately 75 million Americans and is the second-leading preventable risk factor for death in the U.S. High blood pressure can go unrecognized because it often has no warning signs or symptoms, and many people don't realize they have it. People of all ages and backgrounds can develop hypertension, and having high blood pressure can lead to serious or fatal health problems. Recent research from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2007-2008 (NHANES) indicates that an estimated half of all adults with high blood pressure still have uncontrolled hypertension.

A recent national online survey of adults (ages 18 and older) diagnosed with hypertension, and primary care physicians and cardiologists, found patients' attitudes and physicians' perceptions regarding uncontrolled hypertension don't always align, specifically in the areas of patient motivation and involvement. According to the survey, nearly all (96 percent) of the 507 patients whose self-reported blood pressure indicated uncontrolled hypertension feel very motivated to take their medication as prescribed, and 65 percent feel very motivated to make changes to diet and exercise habits. The results from the physician survey reveal that, on average, primary care physicians feel 65 percent of their patients with uncontrolled hypertension are motivated to comply with their medication regimen, and feel that even fewer of their patients with uncontrolled hypertension (34 percent, on average) are motivated to make lifestyle changes to their diet and exercise habits.

"Controlling hypertension requires a collaborative effort among patients and physicians, and includes medication, lifestyle



It is important to work with your physician to regularly check your blood pressure and set a blood pressure goal.

modifications and regular monitoring of blood pressure," said Michael J. Bloch, M.D., clinical hypertension specialist at the University of Nevada School of Medicine. "Given the serious consequences of uncontrolled hypertension, patients should ensure they are aware of the blood pressure goals set by their physician and the necessary steps to achieving control."

The survey findings also indicate differing opinions among patients and physicians related to patient involvement. A majority (85 percent) of all patients with hypertension agree they are as involved in making decisions about blood pressure control as they would like to be. Only half (56 percent) of physicians say most of their patients are as involved in decision-making about blood pressure control as *they* would like them to be.

The CONTROL Hypertension (Consequences of Not Taking Control of Hypertension) Survey was conducted from October 25 to November 11, 2010 by Mended Hearts, a community-based, national heart patient support organization, and Takeda Pharmaceuticals North America, Inc. Data for the survey were collected online by Richard Day Research, a national health care research

firm. The sample included 1,054 adults (ages 18 and older) diagnosed with hypertension who were currently under the care of a physician and taking hypertension medication, and 457 health care professionals—comprised of 253 primary care physicians and 204 cardiologists. The non-random sample of patients with hypertension was recruited from an independent online panel of adults with hypertension. The non-random sample of primary care physicians and cardiologists was recruited via e-mail and telephone from independent national physician databases.

Sample stratification and weights were employed to ensure the patient sample reflects the gender, age, race and income of this population based on data from NHANES. For more information on the results from the survey, visit www.mendedhearts.org.

Important Hypertension Facts:

- **A health care professional can diagnose high blood pressure through a simple blood pressure monitoring device, such as a blood pressure cuff. A blood pressure reading monitors the force of blood against the artery walls as it circulates through the body.**
- **In reading blood pressure, the first (or top) number is systolic pressure, the maximum pressure in the artery as the heart contracts, and the second (or bottom) number is diastolic pressure, the lowest pressure in the artery when the heart is between contractions.**
- **Hypertension is defined as elevated blood pressure 140 mm Hg or greater systolic or 90 mm Hg or greater diastolic.**