

Call to Action

for the prevention and control of high blood pressure

Sao Paulo 2019



- Simple interventions for hypertension are feasible in all settings and can strengthen primary care.
- Evidence-based policies supporting healthy choices could largely prevent hypertension.
- Evidence-based lifestyle changes and medication regimens could control hypertension in most individuals, if systematically applied to the population.
- Hypertension interventions can be a model for managing other noncommunicable disease risk factors.
- Urgent, sustained action focused on effective public policies and health system changes is needed to prevent and control hypertension.

We call on healthcare professionals and partner organizations to undertake the following actions to advance management, control and prevention of high blood pressure globally:

1. FOLLOW BEST PRACTICES

- Stay up to date with global standards in hypertension prevention and control.
- Measure blood pressure at all relevant clinical encounters.
- Promote, procure, and enforce accurate measurement of blood pressure, including the use of validated blood pressure measurement devices.
- Assess cardiovascular risk objectively and check for organ damage in those diagnosed with hypertension. Manage all cardiovascular risks by nationally or internationally recognized standards.
- Use a simple directive algorithm to diagnose and manage hypertension in all patients except those ill-suited or with contraindications to use of an algorithm.
- Optimize patient-centered care using a team-based approach, employing non-physician professionals to measure blood pressure and perform other tasks.

- Treat people with blood pressure of 160/100 mmHg or higher immediately with lifestyle change and medication.
- Regularly assess patient adherence and use registries with performance reporting.
- Assess patients for diet, tobacco use, alcohol consumption, physical activity and obesity, and provide individualized advice, including tobacco cessation and alcohol cessation or reduction.
- Participate in community blood pressure screening programs, such as May Measurement Month and World Hypertension Day (May 17).

2. ENGAGE PRIMARY CARE

- Ensure primary health care providers are central to hypertension control strategies.
- Develop education programs that focus on key interventions, including the use of technology, to systematically manage hypertension.
- Provide feedback on home blood pressure monitoring data to enhance patient adherence and reduce therapeutic inertia.

3. EMPOWER PATIENTS

Encourage patients to:

- Follow healthy lifestyles.
- Get blood pressure checked regularly, know, and understand their numbers.
- Build a medication routine, monitor medications, and adhere to treatment.
- Connect with health care providers through digital and mobile tools.
- Maintain social support networks, as they can enhance treatment effectiveness.

4. RECOGNIZE AND REWARD

- Recognize programs and individuals for overcoming barriers and improving outcomes.
- Nominate deserving programs, program representatives, and individuals for World Hypertension League and International Society of Hypertension recognition awards.

5. ADVOCATE

Advocate for:

- Policies that promote healthy diets, facilitate physical activity, reduce sodium, decrease harmful alcohol consumption, and eliminate tobacco use and artificial trans-fat.
- Policies that ensure the sale and use of validated automated blood pressure devices.
- Updated national drug formularies to ensure the availability and affordability of high-quality antihypertensive medications, with emphasis on long acting and single pill combination medicines.
- Regular training and certification for health care professionals and those who regularly assess blood pressure.
- Team-based, patient-centered care.
- Use of hypertension registries for clinical follow-up and performance feedback.

TRANSFORMING PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Health care policies and health system interventions, such as the HEARTS technical package led by the World Health Organization, can improve hypertension prevention and control and strengthen primary care. HEARTS advocates for team-based care, reliable and affordable antihypertensive medication, systematic measurement of blood pressure, use of validated electronic blood pressure monitors by trained staff, use of a simple treatment algorithm, use of a hypertension registry, and regular population hypertension surveys. Initiatives such as May Measurement Month and World Hypertension Day can also increase global screening and hypertension awareness.

GLOBAL RESOURCES FOR BEST PRACTICES

- Knowledge Action Portal: <https://www.knowledge-action-portal.com/>
- LINKS Global Community for Cardiovascular Health: <https://www.linkscommunity.org/>
- WHO HEARTS Technical Package: https://www.who.int/cardiovascular_diseases/hearts/en/
- Pan American Health Organization: https://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_topics&view=article&id=218&Itemid=40876&lang=en
- PAHO Virtual Campus for Public Health: <https://mooc.campusvirtualsp.org/enrol/index.php?id=92>.
- World Hypertension League: <http://www.whleague.org/>
- International Hypertension Society: <http://ish-world.com/index.htm>