

Health Brief: Hypertension in Tennessee

HEALTH BRIEF

STATE of the STATE

HYPERTENSION

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is called “the silent killer” because it often has no symptoms.

1/2 of Tennessee
seniors
have high blood pressure.

One in 5 adults in the U.S. has high blood pressure but doesn't know it.

38.5% of Tennessee adults have high blood pressure, which is higher than the U.S. average of 33%.

More than 40% of African-American men and women have high blood pressure.

Hypertension is the direct or contributing cause of 1,100 deaths daily in the U.S.

What is hypertension?

Commonly known as high blood pressure, hypertension occurs when blood consistently pumps through the blood vessels too forcefully.

High blood pressure can damage the arteries that restrict blood flow, leading to heart disease or other problems.

What do blood pressure numbers mean?

- Systolic pressure (the top number) measures the amount of pressure in your arteries when your heart beats.
- Diastolic pressure (the bottom number) measures the pressure of blood flow between beats, when the heart is at rest.

Both numbers are measured to determine blood pressure.

- 119/79 or lower is considered normal blood pressure
- 140/90 or higher is considered high blood pressure

Since hypertension often has no symptoms, measuring blood pressure is the only way to find a problem.

1.3 million

Tennesseans have high blood pressure.

Prehypertension

A person is considered to be at-risk for hypertension if:

- Their systolic pressure is 120–139, or
- Their diastolic pressure is 80–89.

BLOOD PRESSURE	SYSTOLIC (upper #)		DIASTOLIC (lower #)
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Prehypertension	120 - 139	or	80 - 89
High blood pressure (Hypertension) stage 1	140 - 159	or	90 - 99
High blood pressure (Hypertension) stage 2	160+	or	100+
Hypertensive crisis (Emergency care needed)	180+	or	110+

How common is high blood pressure?

In the U.S.

33.5% of adults in the U.S. have high blood pressure. That's 1 in 3 Americans, or 85 million people.

In Tennessee

- **38.5% of adults in Tennessee have high blood pressure.**
- **More than 50% of adults 65+ in Tennessee have high blood pressure.**
- **By 2030, Tennessee is projected to have 1,714,690 cases of hypertension.**

HYPERTENSION IN TENNESSEE

Current adult hypertension rate (2015)

38.5%

Rank among states (2015)

7 /51

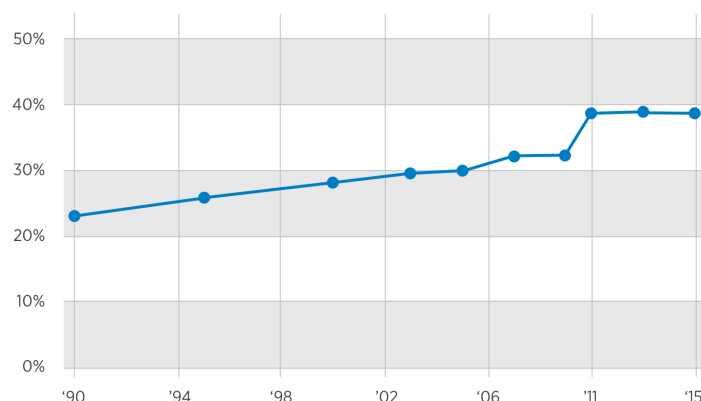
Hypertension cases in 2010

1,299,689

Projected cases of hypertension
in 2030 at current pace

1,714,690

Historical adult hypertension (1990-2015)



What are the risk factors for high blood pressure?

Non-behavioral

- Family history of hypertension
- Pregnancy
- Age
- Being African-American

Men are more likely to develop hypertension before age 55. Women are more likely to develop hypertension after age 55.

At 40%, African-Americans have one of the highest rates of high blood pressure in the world. Hypertension develops earlier in African-Americans than in whites and is more severe.

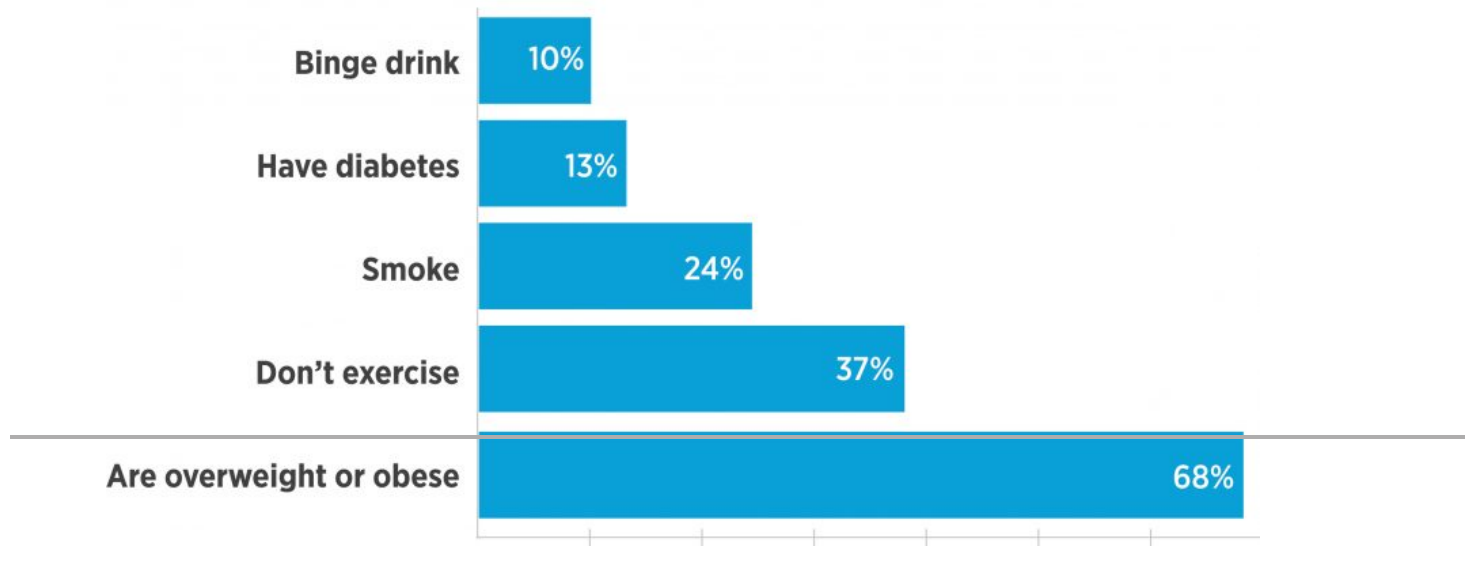
Behavioral

- Smoking
- High sodium diet
- Physical inactivity
- Obesity
- Excessive drinking of alcohol
- Diabetes
- Prehypertension

In Tennessee

- 24% of adults smoke
- 37% don't exercise
- 68% are overweight or obese
- 13% have diabetes
- 3% drink heavily (2+ alcoholic drinks/day) and nearly 10% binge drink (5+ drinks on one occasion)

Of Tennessee adults



How can you prevent and/or manage high blood pressure?

- Know your risk
- Eat a [healthy diet](#)
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Engage in regular physical activity
- Stop smoking
- Limit alcohol beverages

How is BlueCross addressing hypertension?

BlueCross has:

- Awarded [Healthier Tennessee](#) a \$3 million grant to encourage healthier diets, more physical activity and smoking cessation across the state.
- Granted \$70,000 to [Northside Neighborhood House](#) to hold weekly cooking classes focused on creating nutritious meals on a budget.
- Gave \$317,000 to fund the [Journey to Health](#) program at Nashville's Faith Family Medical Center.
- Invested more than \$1.7 million to transform outside spaces into areas where people can get fit, including [Fitness Zones](#), [RiverFit](#) and more.
- Awarded \$1.6 million to expand the [Greater Kingsport Family Y](#).

To learn more about heart health in Tennessee visit: bettertennessee.com/tag/heart-health