

# Data SNAPSHOT



## Hypertension Disparities in Medicare Fee-For-Service Beneficiaries

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is one of the most common medical conditions in the world. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that nearly half (45%) of adults in the United States have hypertension during 2017 - March 2020, and the prevalence increased with age.<sup>1</sup> Hypertension is the most important modifiable risk factor for coronary heart disease (the leading cause of death in the US), stroke, congestive heart failure, and end-stage renal disease. The CDC reports that in 2020, more than 670,000 deaths in the United States had hypertension as a primary or contributing cause.<sup>2</sup>

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS's) chronic conditions data from the [Mapping Medicare Disparities Tool](#) shows that 64% of people with Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) had claims with a diagnosis of hypertension in 2021, and the prevalence rate varied by age, sex, race and ethnicity, eligibility for Medicare and Medicaid, and geographic areas.<sup>3</sup>

As shown in Figure 1, the prevalence of hypertension among FFS beneficiaries increased by age: 47, 58, 75, 83 percent for ages <65, 65-74, 75-84, and 85+, respectively.

Figure 2 shows the age standardized prevalence of hypertension by race and ethnicity. Black/African American beneficiaries had the highest prevalence (74%) of hypertension among all racial and ethnic groups, followed by American Indian/Alaska Native (68%), White (64%), Asian/Pacific Islander (62%) and Hispanic (61%) beneficiaries.

Figure 3 shows, the prevalence was lowest in Colorado (52%), Montana and Wyoming (both at 53%), and highest in Louisiana (73%), Alabama and Mississippi (both at 74%).

Figure 4 shows geographic differences exist in hypertension prevalence among minority racial and ethnic groups at the county level.

Hypertension can be successfully managed with lifestyle changes, such as eating a healthy diet and being physically active, as well as with medication to lower blood pressure. There is only one way to know if you have it: have your doctor measure it. As part of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare pays for a free annual wellness visit which includes blood pressure screening, yet a claims' analysis found that only 38% of Medicare FFS beneficiaries took advantage of this benefit in 2021.<sup>3</sup>

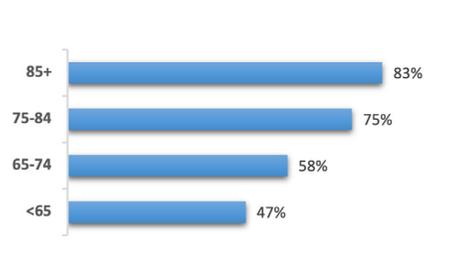


Figure 1. Prevalence of Hypertension among People with FFS by Age Group, 2021

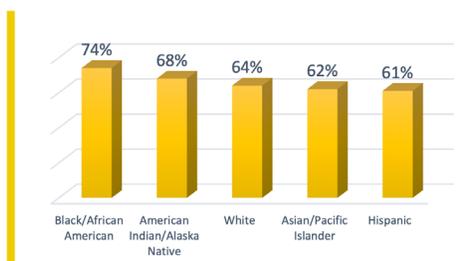


Figure 2. Age Standardized Prevalence of Hypertension among People with FFS by Race/Ethnicity, 2021

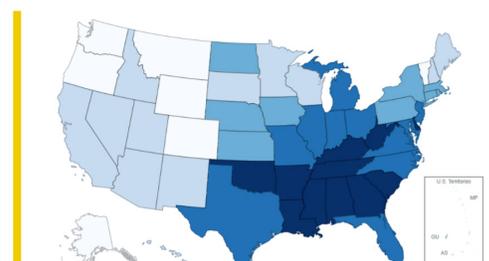


Figure 3. Age Standardized Prevalence of Hypertension among People with FFS by State/Territories, 2021

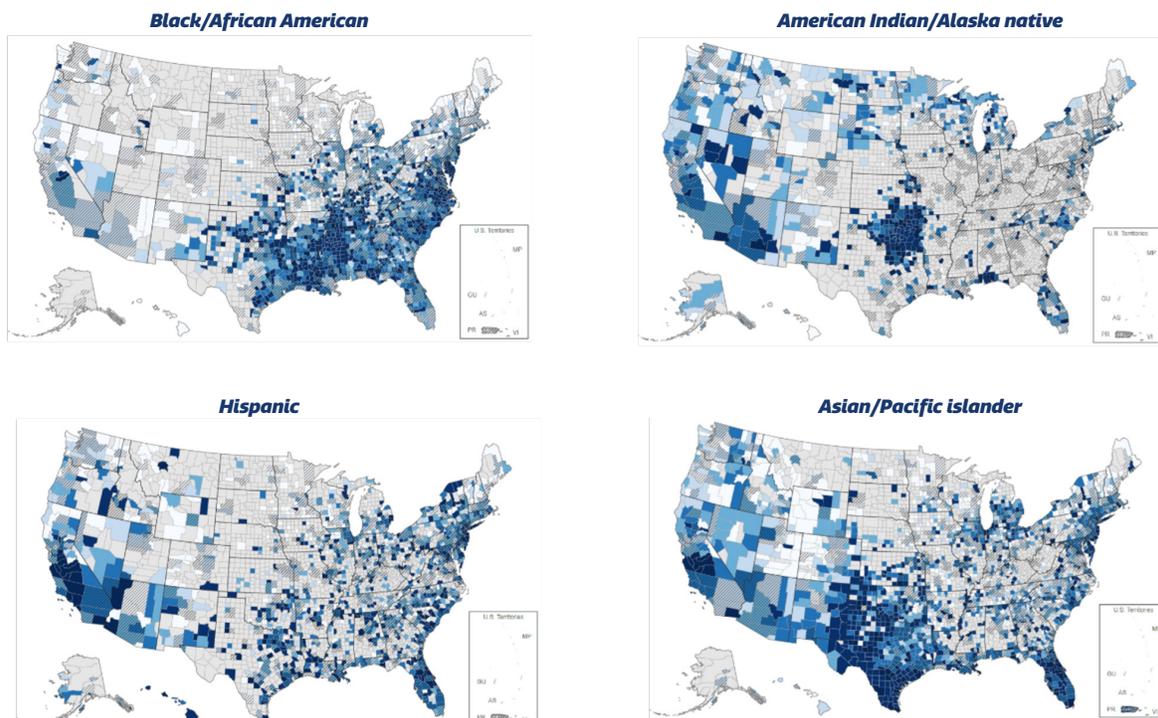


Figure 4. Hypertension Prevalence Maps for Minority Race/Ethnicity by County among People with FFS, 2021

# Beneficiary Resources

[Medicare & You: Medicare's Preventive Benefits](#)

[Medicare & You: High Blood Pressure and Osteoporosis](#)

[“Welcome to Medicare” preventive visit](#)

[Yearly “wellness” visits](#)

[Chronic care management services](#)

[Million Hearts](#)

[High Blood Pressure & Kidney Disease](#)

# Provider Resources

[Connected Care: The Chronic Care Management Resource](#)

[Merit-based Incentive Payment System \(MIPS\)](#)

[Decision Memo for Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring \(ABPM\) \(CAG-00067R2\)](#)

[Hypertension Control Change Package for Clinicians](#)

[Hypertension Resources for Health Professionals](#)

[Hypertension – American Medical Association](#)

# References/Sources

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2017–March 2020 Prepandemic Data Files—Development of Files and Prevalence Estimates for Selected Health Outcomes: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr158-508.pdf>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Underlying Cause of Death, 1999–2020. CDC WONDER Online Database. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2022. <https://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>
3. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Mapping Medicare Disparities Tool. <https://data.cms.gov/tools/mapping-medicare-disparities-by-population>

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