

56% of UK Population Could be Living with Undiagnosed High Blood Pressure – According to NEW Consumer Poll

Submitted by: ROCK PR

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Despite nearly half (45%) of the UK population having had their blood pressure checked in the last 12 months, over half of these (56%) don't know their blood pressure numbers and could be living with undiagnosed high blood pressure – increasing their chances of having a stroke, heart attack or heart failure. That's according to a NEW consumer poll by national charity, Blood Pressure UK to mark Know Your Numbers! Week (5-11th September).

Today, Blood Pressure UK is urging all adults (of all ages) to check their blood pressure, ideally with a home blood pressure monitor and, in tandem, reduce their salt intake. The more people tested, to enable them to control their high blood pressure, the more premature deaths will be prevented – especially since high blood pressure is largely symptomless and also one of the biggest single (and preventable) causes of death in the UK.

With nearly 6 million people in the UK sitting on a ticking time bomb unaware that they have raised blood pressure, the only way of knowing what your blood pressure is, is to measure it. Substantial evidence supporting the use of home blood pressure monitoring has shown it gives a better reflection of blood pressure, as being tested in somewhere like a GP surgery or pharmacy which can make patients feel anxious and can affect the result. What's more, it allows patients to monitor their condition more easily in the long term. According to NHS England, regular home blood pressure monitoring across a population of 50,000 patients could prevent up to 500 heart attacks and 745 strokes over five years.

What's more, research shows that eating too much salt is also a major cause of high blood pressure, particularly the rise in blood pressure with age. As a nation, if we cut one gram of salt from our average daily salt intake, this would cause a fall in blood pressure and there would be approximately 6,000 fewer deaths from strokes and heart attacks each year in the UK. Worryingly, 34% of the population surveyed think knowing their blood pressure numbers is not important.

As part of Blood Pressure UK's Know Your Numbers! Week (5-11th September) aimed at getting the nation tested, the charity, in part association with Kinetik Wellbeing, will be visiting 5 cities across the UK during 'The Week' offering FREE blood pressure checks and advice as part of the Know Your Numbers! Roadshow. These include:

- 5th September Dortmund Square – Leeds
- 6th September Market Street – Manchester
- 7th September Royal Albert Dock – Liverpool
- 8th September High Street – Birmingham
- 9th-11th September – Chestnut Plaza Westfield Stratford

Phil Pyatt, CEO of Blood Pressure UK comments:

"Everyone needs to take control of their health by checking their blood pressure, especially given high blood pressure does not show any clear symptoms, hence being dubbed the 'silent killer'. That's why it's so important to take control of your health by Knowing Your Numbers as well as benefitting from simple improvements in diet and lifestyle such as eating less salt, more fruit and vegetables and doing

more exercise.”

Professor Graham MacGregor, Chairman of Blood Pressure UK says:

“Half of all strokes and heart disease are due to high blood pressure which can easily be reduced, particularly by reducing your salt intake and if necessary, taking tablets which nowadays have no side effects. This will reduce your risk of developing a heart attack, heart failure or a stroke, which can either be fatal or cause life-changing disabilities. This is completely avoidable, it is not the time to dither and delay – it could save your life.’

Hemini Bharadia, Marketing Manager for Blood Pressure UK explains:

“We encourage the public to take control of their health and get their blood pressure checked at one of the roadshow locations if you’re in the area or at home using a blood pressure monitor. Home blood pressure monitoring is an effective and inexpensive way to manage your blood pressure and the evidence behind it continues to get stronger. It takes the pressure off the NHS at the same time, and it really can save lives.”

Regional stats from the consumer poll are also available upon request.

To find out more visit: bloodpressureuk.org

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About Blood Pressure UK

Blood Pressure UK is the UK’s leading blood pressure charity working to lower the nation’s blood pressure to prevent disability and death from stroke and heart disease. The charity provides information and support for people with high blood pressure and raises awareness to prevent the condition. Blood Pressure UK is the operating name of the Blood Pressure Association, charity reg. 1058944.

About Kinetik Wellbeing

Kinetik Wellbeing is one of the largest suppliers of home-use medical devices in the UK.

Facts about blood pressure from Blood Pressure UK:

- High blood pressure has no obvious signs or symptoms. The only way to find out if you have the condition is to have a blood pressure check.
- Untreated high blood pressure is the major risk factor for strokes, heart attacks and heart failure. It is also a major risk factor for kidney disease and dementia.
- A healthy blood pressure is a level of 120/80mmHg or less.
- A blood pressure of 121/81mmHg to 139/89mmHg is on the high side and lifestyle changes such as eating less salt, more fruit and veg and losing weight if necessary should be advised.
- If readings are consistently at or above 140/90mmHg, high blood pressure is diagnosed, and action should be taken to lower it by leading a healthier lifestyle, and, if necessary, by taking medication as directed by your doctor.

You can measure your blood pressure at home or in a healthcare setting, our simple guidelines are available free on our website:

<http://www.bloodpressureuk.org/your-blood-pressure/how-to-lower-your-blood-pressure/monitoring-your-blood-pressure-at-home>

If you choose to measure your blood at home, remember to choose a home blood pressure monitor with an upper arm cuff which is the right size for your arm and make sure it is UK approved.

Blood Pressure UK's 'Top five tips for a healthy blood pressure':

1. Cut down on salt – Reducing your salt intake is the quickest way to lower your blood pressure. Don't add it when cooking or at the table, avoid using stock cubes, gravy and soy sauce, check food labels and avoid processed foods high in salt – aim to eat less than 6g a day.
2. Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables – at least five different portions every day.
3. Watch your weight – try to reach the right weight for your height.
4. Exercise regularly – that doesn't have to mean the gym, how about a regular lunchtime walk? 30 minutes five times a week is ideal. If you are unsure about taking up exercise, ask your GP.
5. Drink alcohol in moderation – up to 14 units a week for both men and women – a glass of wine or a pint of beer is 2-3 units.