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High Blood Pressure: Over 50 Percent Of People With The Condition Are Unaware They Are Hypertensive

More than half of people diagnosed with high blood pressure do not have it under control and many more go undiagnosed, according to research carried out at the University of Warwick.

Professor Franco Cappuccio from Warwick Medical School at the University of Warwick led the only UK team to participate in a European study examining awareness, treatment and control of high blood pressure, or hypertension. Hypertension is an important cause of serious diseases such as heart attacks and strokes.

The IMMIDIET study, published in the Journal of Hypertension, examined 1,604

citizens from three geographical areas, south-west London in the UK, Limburg in Belgium and Abruzzo in Italy. All participants underwent a medical examination, including blood pressure measurement, and answered a lifestyle and health questionnaire.

The researchers found 24% of participants had high blood pressure and 56% of these people were not aware of their condition. Of those that were aware, less than half had their high blood pressure under control (less than 140mmHg for systolic pressure and 80 for diastolic pressure). Looking at the differences between regions, the researchers found the UK participants had lower blood pressure overall and better control

than the Italians and Belgians.

Professor Franco Cappuccio said the study was a call for better management of hypertension and the implementation of widespread strategies to prevent the condition in the first place. He said: "Our results show that high blood pressure is a looming problem for Europe. Although in the UK the management of high blood pressure is better as compared to some other countries, in part due to the incentives that GPs receive to achieve blood pressure targets. We still have too many patients not adequately treated and the incidence of hypertension is rising still."



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