



Speaking Out About the 'Silent Killer'

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is known as a '[silent killer](#)' because it usually has no warning signs. Nearly half of adults in the U.S. have hypertension, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), and only about 1 in 4 of them have the condition under control. Encourage our members to talk with you about their blood pressure and heart health.

Why Is Blood Pressure Control Important?

Controlling high blood pressure can prevent heart disease and stroke, which are among the [leading cause of death](#) in the U.S. According to the [American Heart Association](#), blood pressure control can also reduce the risk of kidney disease, vision loss, peripheral artery disease and sexual dysfunction.

Closing Care Gaps

Controlling high blood pressure is recognized as a quality measure by the [National Committee of Quality Assurance NCQA](#). The NCQA recommends controlling both the systolic blood pressure (SBP) and diastolic blood pressure (DBP) in adults as follows:

- SBP < 140 mmHg
- DBP < 90 mmHg

View our [clinical practice guidelines](#) on hypertension.

Best Practices

Best practices include talking with members about:

- Taking medications as prescribed
- Smoking cessation
- Increased physical activity
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Limiting alcohol intake
- Eating a low-sodium diet
- Returning for follow-up visits. Reach out to members who cancel or miss appointments and assist them with rescheduling as soon as possible.

Best practices also include using the proper codes when filing claims. Proper coding can help identify gaps in care, provide accurate data and streamline your administrative processes.

To support quality of care, we are providing information to providers and members to encourage discussions on health topics. Watch for more health care quality in [News and Updates](#).

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