



One of a series of tip sheets that look at key Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set measures

Controlling high blood pressure

This measure examines the percentage of patients ages 18 to 85 years old who had a diagnosis of hypertension and whose blood pressure is controlled during the current year. Blood pressure control is defined as:

- 18 to 59 years old = BP < 140/90
- 60 to 85 years old **without diabetes** = BP < 150/90
- 60 to 85 years old **with diabetes** = BP < 140/90

What counts?

While blood pressure control is important all year long, the blood pressure reading used for measurement purposes is the **last one taken during the year**, and it must occur **after** the date when hypertension was diagnosed.

If there is more than one reading at a single visit, the lowest systolic and diastolic readings are the ones that are used.

Improving HEDIS® scores*

Proper documentation is critical:

- **Document diagnosis prior to June 30.** Examples of how you can document an evidence-confirming diagnosis include: HTN, High BP, Elevated BP, Hypertension, Borderline HTN, Intermittent HTN, History of HTN, Hypertensive vascular disease, Hyperpiesia and Hyperpiesis.
- **Record all blood pressure readings and dates obtained.** Repeat all elevated blood pressures later in the visit; they often drop once the patient has been in the examining room awhile. Use the exact reading and don't "round up" a manual blood pressure reading. Rounding up just a few points can result in a reading moving from "controlled" to "uncontrolled."
- See exclusions on back.

Did you know?

- **Hypertension affects one out of every three adults in the U.S.**
- **Less than half of individuals with hypertension have their condition under control.**
- **African Americans have a much higher risk of developing hypertension during their lifetime and at a younger age.**

*HEDIS, which stands for Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set, is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

Exclusions

Patients with one of the following conditions can be excluded from the controlling high blood pressure measure:

- End-stage renal disease or kidney transplant
- Pregnancy
- Non-acute inpatient admission during the current year

Tip:

Reach out. Contact patients to remind them of the need for follow-up appointments. If a patient has been diagnosed with hypertension and no blood pressure reading has been recorded during the measurement year, then it's assumed that the patient's blood pressure is not being controlled. This will negatively affect the provider's HEDIS score.

Educate. Poor control and compliance lead to poor outcomes. And knowing the risks can help patients make better decisions. Be sure to reinforce the need for patients to take their medications regularly and correctly to help improve compliance and keep blood pressure under control.