

Study suggests lower targets for systolic blood pressure

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Dr. Jiang He is the Joseph S. Copes chair and professor in the Department of Epidemiology at Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

A new study conducted by researchers from Tulane University finds reducing target systolic blood pressure below current recommendations significantly reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease and preventable death. The latest study supports previous research, which found more intensive management of hypertension greatly reduced the risk of heart attack and stroke.

The results of the latest study are published in [JAMA Cardiology](#).

Hypertension is the leading preventable risk factor for cardiovascular disease and death. Current guidelines call for adults with hypertension to lower their systolic blood pressure to less than 140 mm Hg. Researchers from Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and Tulane School of Medicine analyzed 42 clinical trials involving more than 144,000 patients. They found significant linear associations between systolic blood pressure and risk of cardiovascular disease and mortality, with the lowest risk at a systolic blood pressure of 120 to 124 mm Hg.

“These findings support more intensive systolic blood pressure control among adults with hypertension,” says Jiang He, Joseph S. Copes chair and professor in the Department of Epidemiology at Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. “They suggest the need for revising the current clinical guidelines for management of high blood pressure.”

He says future clinical trials are needed to study the effects of intensive blood pressure reduction on chronic kidney disease and dementia. In addition, clinical trials of intensive blood pressure management among patients with diabetes and

ischemic stroke are needed.