

15 Million Americans Have Increased Risk for Heart Failure

Most individuals with an elevated risk for heart failure had modifiable risk factors, such as obesity and high blood pressure.

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A study [published in the Annals of Internal Medicine](#) found that about 15 million U.S. adults have an elevated risk for heart failure, [according to Healio](#).

Many factors can influence your risk for [heart disease](#) or [heart failure](#). Some can be controlled; others cannot. Knowing your risk factors and their combined effect can help you and your health care provider determine what you can do to prevent cardiovascular disease.

In general, Black Americans have a higher risk for [high blood pressure](#) and [diabetes](#), both of which greatly increase a person's risk for cardiovascular disease.

For the study, researchers analyzed data on almost 4,900 adults ages 30 to 79 who were not pregnant and did not have known cardiovascular disease. This group represented about 143.2 million Americans.

"We sought to understand whether there is a unique group of individuals at elevated risk of heart failure who were not identified as high risk of atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease," said study coauthor Linnea Wilson, MPH, a clinical research assistant at Beth Israel Lahey Health.

Using an American Heart Association [prediction model](#), researchers estimated the risk of heart failure for the study group over a 10-year period, classifying individuals' risk for heart failure as low (below 10%), intermediate (10% to 19.9%) or elevated (20% or greater).

Among those with an elevated risk for heart failure, 62% were between 70 and 79 years old. Black adults made up 9.7% of the low-risk group and 14.2% of the elevated-risk group.

Most people at higher risk for heart failure had risk factors—such as obesity and hypertension—that could be mitigated via lifestyle changes or medical interventions. In fact, more than half of participants with an elevated risk for heart failure had high blood pressure, and over half had overweight or obesity.

The prediction model also found that the average estimated 10-year risk for heart failure was 3.7%, with 15 million adults identified as having an intermediate or high risk.

“If primary care clinicians use the PREVENT-HF calculator, they can provide additional counseling to patients with elevated risk of [heart failure] on ways to reduce their risks,” Wilson told Healio. “This may include stronger recommendations for risk factor control, such as blood pressure reduction and weight loss, using the risk score to help communicate the importance of risk factor control.”

To read more, click [#Heart Failure](#). There, you’ll find headlines such as “[Too Much Sitting Linked to Increase Risk for Heart Disease](#),” “[Women and Minorities Bear the Brunt of Medical Misdiagnosis](#)” and “[Cardiovascular Disease Is Primed to Kill More Older Adults, Especially Blacks and Hispanics](#).”