Low Education Linked to High Blood Pressure Among African Americans

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Educational disparities—and not West African ancestry—aresignificantly associated with African Americans' higher rates of hypertension (highblood pressure), compared with their white counterparts, according to a studyto be published in the American Journal of Public Health and reported by HealthDay News.

For the study, researchers at the Robert Wood JohnsonFoundation at Harvard University examined data from more than 3,500 Americanadults. Scientists found that four years of additional education was linked toa lower systolic blood pressure (the top number), and that this could reduce alarge number hypertension-related deaths in the United States.

In addition, scientists found an even greater decrease in bloodpressure for each year of education.

"While genetics undoubtedly plays a role in hypertension,our findings suggest that education level plays an even larger role in healthdisparities in hypertension," said Amy Non, PhD, MPH, the study's leadresearcher. "This means that improved access to education among AfricanAmericans may reduce racial disparities in blood pressure."

High blood pressure is a precursor to a group ofcardiovascular diseases and can lead to stroke, heart failure, kidney disease,blindness and dementia. Currently, African Americans develop high bloodpressure at younger ages than other ethnic groups and are more likely todevelop the complications associated with hypertension than any other ethnicgroup.

Non explained that higher levels of general education canlead to improved health knowledge and behaviors, better job opportunities and amore positive attitude.

Did you know that early heart disease is found in 9 out of10 African Americans with hypertension? Click here to read more.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/Low-Education-Hypertension-22586-4629