Chintzy Paychecks Linked to Increased Risk of Hypertension

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There's a saying that no amount of money in the world can buy good health, but an unhealthy paycheck may have an ill effect on young adults and women in particular, according to recent study results published in The European Journal of Public Health and reported in a UC Davis Health System press release.

For the study, researchers from the University of California-Davis evaluated U.S. data from a total of 5,651 household heads and their spouses for three time periods: 1999 to 2001, 2001 to 2003 and 2003 to 05. (The sample was limited to working adults between 25 and 65 years of age. Also, anyone with hypertension during the first year (for example, 1999) of each time period was eliminated from the final sample.

Findings showed there was an especially strong correlation among women and younger adults, ages 25 to 44, who earned lower wages to develop hypertension. In addition, scientists found that for all people, a salary double what they were currently paid decreased their risk of high blood pressure by 16 percent. What's more, women and younger adults whose salary was doubled showed an even lower risk of hypertension—a drop of 30 to 35 percent and 25 to 30 percent, respectively.

"We were surprised that low wages were such a strong risk factor for two populations not typically associated with hypertension, which is more often linked with being older and male," said J. Paul Leigh, the senior study author and a professor of public health sciences at UC Davis. "Our outcome shows that women and younger employees working at the lowest pay scales should be screened regularly for hypertension as well."

Leigh added that wages are a part of the employment environment that easily can be changed. "Policymakers can raise the minimum wage, which tends to increase wages overall and could have significant public-health benefits," Leigh said.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hypertension affects approximately 1 in 3 adults in the United States and costs more than $90 billion each year in health care services, medications and missed work days. Hypertension is also a major contributor to heart disease and

stroke, which are leading causes of death and disability.

Did you know that more obese African-American children are likely to develop hypertension? Click here to read more.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/hypertension-income-youngadults-23420-5876