

High Blood Pressure in Kids Tracks Into Adulthood

By Robert Preidt

Monday, June 16, 2008 - found in National Library of Medicine, NIH

MONDAY, June 16 (HealthDay News) -- People who have high blood pressure in childhood are also prone to hypertension as adults, say researchers who analyzed data from 50 studies conducted over four decades in different countries.

"Our meta-analysis reinforces the concept that blood pressure tracks from childhood to adulthood and that elevated blood pressure in childhood is likely to help predict adult hypertension," co-author Dr. Youfa Wang, associate professor of international health and epidemiology in the Center for Nutrition, Department of International Health, Bloomberg School of Health at Johns Hopkins University, said in a prepared statement.

"A main finding of our study is that there are large variations in the degree of blood pressure tracking between childhood and adulthood reported in previous studies, while our pooled analysis of the related results shows a moderate tracking," Wang said.

"Among several factors that we examined, the two most important factors that affect the degree of tracking are the children's age when they had their blood pressure measured and the length of the follow-up. The later it is measured and the shorter the follow-up, the stronger the tracking."

Wang and colleagues said boys and girls with high blood pressure are similarly likely to have high blood pressure as adults. The evidence also suggests a strong association between being overweight in childhood and high blood pressure.

"There is a stronger association between higher blood pressure in adolescents when they become adults compared to higher blood pressure in younger children," Wang said.

The study also found that systolic blood pressure measured in childhood is a better and stronger predictor of blood pressure in adulthood than diastolic pressure. Systolic and diastolic pressure are the top and bottom number, respectively, in a blood pressure measurement.

"Early detection and intervention is important to overcoming high blood pressure," Wang said. "Lifestyle modification is preferred rather than medication when appropriate to help young people to control their elevated blood pressure to a desirable level. A health diet and adequate exercise can also help reduce the risks of developing many other chronic diseases such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and cardiovascular disease."

The study was published in the journal *Circulation*.

HealthDay

Copyright (c) 2008 [ScoutNews, LLC](#). All rights reserved.