Women and Hypertension

What is Hypertension?
- Hypertension, also referred to as ‘High Blood Pressure’ is characterized by having a blood pressure reading equal to or over 140/90mm Hg (SBP/DBP), taking antihypertensive medicine; or having been told at least twice by a physician or other health professional that one has high blood pressure.\(^1\)
- Hypertension is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease.\(^1\)

Affects more women than men
- The overall prevalence rate of hypertension is nearly equal among US men and women. 41.7 million Women (31.7%) & 38.3 million Men (33.5%).\(^1\)
- After the age of 65, the prevalence rate of hypertension is higher in women (67.8%) than it is in men (62%).\(^1\)
- In 2013, the mortality from hypertension was higher in women at 38,379 deaths than in men at 33,563 deaths.\(^1\)

Risk Factors
- Risk factors for hypertension include:\(^1\):
  - Age
  - Ethnicity (African-American, Caucasian, Mexican-American)
  - Family history of hypertension and genetic factors
  - Overweight and obesity
  - Low levels of physical activity
  - Use of tobacco
  - High sodium, high fat diet
  - Excessive consumption of alcohol
  - Stress
  - Lower socioeconomic status
  - Lower education level
  - Sleep apnea
- Hypertension is more common in women taking oral contraceptives and in women taking postmenopausal hormone therapy than in those who do not.\(^2\)

Detection & Treatment
- 84.4% of Caucasian women, 88.2% of African-American women, and 78.6% of Hispanic-American women are aware that they have hypertension.\(^1\)
- 80.2% of Caucasian women, 81.1% of African-American women, and 70.5% of Hispanic-American women receive treatment for their high blood pressure.\(^1\)

\(^1\) Mozaffarian, Dariush, MD, DrPH, FAHA, Benjamin, Emelia J., MD, ScM, FAHA, Go, Alan S., MD, et. al. Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics 2016 Update: A Report from the American Heart Association Statistics Committee and Stroke Statistics Subcommittee. Circulation 2016. Pages 98; 101; 104 Table 9-1; 105 Table 9-2; 105 Chart 9-1.