

Hypertension in Young Adults in Nigeria: A Review of Prevalence and Emerging Trends

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Introduction. Hypertension is an emerging public health concern among young adults in low- and middle-income countries, including Nigeria. Although national estimates indicate an increasing burden, evidence concerning adults aged 18–40 years remains fragmented across heterogeneous studies. This narrative review aimed to synthesise available evidence on hypertension prevalence among young Nigerian adults and describe emerging trends using national estimates for contextual interpretation.

Methods. A narrative review was conducted using PubMed/MEDLINE, CINAHL, African Journals Online (AJOL), and Google Scholar. Studies published between 2005 and 2025 were considered eligible if conducted in Nigeria and reporting hypertension prevalence among individuals aged 18–40 years or providing extractable data for this age group. Findings were narratively synthesised to describe prevalence patterns and temporal trends.

Results. Nine data sources were reviewed, including eight primary studies involving 5,455 participants and one national study providing contextual age-stratified data. Hypertension prevalence across

primary studies ranged from 8.1% to 35.9%, with generally lower estimates among student populations (8–20%) and higher estimates in community-based adult samples (17–36%). The nationwide REMAH survey reported a prevalence of 6.8% among individuals aged 18–30 years, increasing to 18.1% among those aged 30–39 years. National estimates indicated a four-to-five-fold increase in hypertension among adults aged 20–39 years between 1995 and 2020.

Discussion. Hypertension represents a substantial and growing health concern among young Nigerian adults. The observed prevalence and increasing national trends emphasise the importance of earlier blood pressure screening, targeted risk-reduction strategies, and strengthened public health interventions. Further methodologically standardised studies are needed to improve prevalence estimates and inform age-specific cardiovascular prevention policies.

Keywords: Hypertension, Young Adults, Blood Pressure, Prevalence, Nigeria, Cardiovascular Risk

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