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**Immediate Release**

**Greater London Press Release - 2025**

**Over a Third of Adults in Great London Unaware of Their Blood Pressure – Despite Knowing the Deadly Risks**

Over a third half of adults (37%) living in Greater London don’t know their current blood pressure reading, and over a quarter (27%) don’t check it regularly – despite high blood pressure being the biggest preventable cause of death in the country.

That’s according to a NEW consumer poll[[1]](#footnote-1) from national charity **Blood Pressure UK** which reveals a startling disconnect between public awareness and action as it kicks off *Know Your Numbers! Week* (8–14 September) - the UK’s biggest free blood pressure testing and awareness campaign.

While 81% of adults recognise that high blood pressure can lead to heart attacks, and 76% understand its link to strokes, a huge proportion still aren’t taking steps to monitor their own health. Just 13% know that people over 40 should check their blood pressure once a year – a critical step in preventing life-threatening complications.

Even more worryingly, more than half of those surveyed (53%) mistakenly believe that high blood pressure comes with clear symptoms, when in fact it’s often completely silent until it causes serious harm. And while 64% say they would check their blood pressure more often if they were more aware of the risks, the message clearly isn’t cutting through.

One of the most overlooked dangers is the damage high blood pressure causes to the kidneys. Only 26% of people were aware of this link, despite high blood pressure being one of the leading causes of kidney failure.

Given thereare an estimated 4.2million adults[[2]](#footnote-2) unknowingly living with high blood pressure, increasing their risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney disease, vascular dementia and early death, Blood Pressure UK is urging every adult over 40 to take a simple, potentially lifesaving blood pressure check at least once a year, ideally with a home blood pressure monitor or at a local pharmacy or GP and help locate the ‘Missing Millions’.

**Dr Pauline Swift, Chair of Blood Pressure UK**, says: “These findings are deeply concerning. High blood pressure is a silent killer – it often has no symptoms, yet it’s responsible for more deaths than any other preventable condition in the UK. The fact that nearly half of UK adults don’t know their blood pressure reading is a wake-up call. We’re urging everyone, especially those over 40, to take a simple, quick blood pressure check – at home, in a pharmacy, or with their GP. It could be the most important step they take for their long-term health.”

**Phil Pyatt, CEO of Blood Pressure UK** adds: “We know there are around five million people in the UK living with undiagnosed high blood pressure – the ‘Missing Millions’ who are unknowingly at risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney disease and early death. That’s why Know Your Numbers! Week is so important. A quick check and one small lifestyle change – like cutting back on salt or walking more – could save your life. Don’t wait for symptoms. There usually aren’t any.”

**Dr. Chris Streather, Chief Medical Director for the NHS in London**, said: "Getting your blood pressure checked is vital. Blood pressure issues can often be symptomless, but can cause significant long-term health risks, like heart attacks, strokes and sadly sometimes early death. Whether at home or at your local pharmacy or GP, I encourage all Londoners to take a quick and easy blood pressure check. It could help to improve your health for years to come."

**Mayoral Health Advisor, Dr Tom Coffey**, said: “High blood pressure is a silent threat, which is why the Mayor of London and I are determined to help Londoners stay healthy. Our focus is on prevention - making it easier to walk and cycle, promoting healthier eating, and supporting communities to look out for each other. This weekend there’s an opportunity at Black On The Square to get your blood pressure checked, so we’re encouraging Londoners to come along, enjoy the day, and also potentially improve your health. A quick and easy check can help to prevent strokes, heart disease and kidney failure so more Londoners can live longer, healthier lives, as we build a better London for everyone.”

**Professor Kevin Fenton, Regional Director for London in the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID)**, said: “High blood pressure makes heart attacks and strokes much more likely and usually has no symptoms. People of Black African, Black Caribbean and South Asian heritage are typically at higher risk of having a heart attack or stroke, so early detection through regular blood pressure checks is particularly important.

 High blood pressure can often by lowered by lifestyle factors such as quitting smoking, reducing alcohol consumption, eating healthily and taking regular exercise.”

Londoners can find out which pharmacies do free blood pressure checks by clicking here: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/find-a-pharmacy-that-offers-free-blood-pressure-checks/>

To find out more visit: bloodpressureuk.org

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**About Blood Pressure UK**

Blood Pressure UK is the UK’s leading blood pressure charity working to lower the nation’s blood pressure to prevent disability and death from stroke and heart disease. The charity provides information and support for people with high blood pressure and raises awareness to prevent the condition. Blood Pressure UK is the operating name of the Blood Pressure Association, charity reg. 1058944.

*Know Your Numbers!* Week (which runs from 8th-14th September 2025) is the UK’sbiggest free blood pressure testing and awareness event. The campaign encourages people to have their blood pressure measured so they can take the steps needed to maintain a healthy blood pressure and reduce their risk of debilitating strokes and heart attacks.

**Facts about blood pressure from Blood Pressure UK:**

* High blood pressure has no obvious signs or symptoms. The only way to find out if you have the condition is to have a blood pressure check.
* Untreated high blood pressure is the major risk factor for strokes, heart attacks and heart failure. It is also a major risk factor for kidney disease and dementia.
* A healthy blood pressure is a level of 120/80mmHg or less.
* A blood pressure of 121/81mmHg to 139/89mmHg is on the high side and lifestyle changes such as eating less salt, more fruit and veg and losing weight if necessary, should be advised.
* If readings are consistently at or above 140/90mmHg, high blood pressure is diagnosed, and action should be taken to lower it by leading a healthier lifestyle, and, if necessary, by taking medication as directed by your doctor.

Substantial evidence supporting the use of home blood pressure monitoring has shown it gives a better reflection of blood pressure, as being tested in somewhere like a GP surgery or pharmacy which can make patients feel anxious and can affect the result. What’s more, it allows patients to monitor their condition more easily in the long term. According to NHS England, regular home blood pressure monitoring across a population of 50,000 patients could prevent up to [500 heart attacks and 745 strokes over five years](https://www.thennt.com/nnt/anti-hypertensives-to-prevent-death-heart-attacks-and-strokes/).

If you choose to measure your blood at home, remember to choose a home blood pressure monitor with an upper arm cuff which is the right size for your arm and make sure it is UK approved.

**Blood Pressure UK’s ‘Top five tips for a healthy blood pressure’:**

1. **Cut down on salt** – Reducing your salt intake it the quickest way to lower your blood pressure. Don’t add it when cooking or at the table, avoid using stock cubes, gravy and soy sauce, check food labels and avoid processed foods high in salt – aim to eat less than 6g a day.
2. **Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables** – at least five different portions every day.
3. **Watch your weight** – try to reach the right weight for your height.
4. **Exercise regularly** – that doesn’t have to mean the gym, how about a regular lunchtime walk? 30 minutes five times a week is ideal. If you are unsure about taking up exercise, ask your GP.
5. **Drink alcohol in moderation** – up to 14 units a week for both men and women – a glass of wine or a pint of beer is 2-3 units.

**About Black On The Square:**

Black On The Square is the Mayor of London’s annual celebration of Black culture, and the people and communities helping shape the capital’s creativity.

This free, family-friendly event takes place in Trafalgar Square on Saturday 6 September from 12-6pm. Expect music and lots of entertainment, including a packed programme of activities and workshops for all ages.

Blood Pressure UK, together with its brand partner Kinetik Wellbeing, a leading supplier of home-use medical devices, will be offering free blood pressure checks throughout the day.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.london.gov.uk/events/black-square-2025>

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1. The research was conducted by Censuswide, among a sample of 2,000 UK adults (aged 40-55). The data was collected between 18.06.2025-23.06.2025. Censuswide abides by and employs members of the Market Research Society and follows the MRS code of conduct and ESOMAR principles. Censuswide is also a member of the British Polling Council. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/articles/riskfactorsforundiagnosedhighbloodpressureinengland/2015to2019> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)