

## ***10) High blood pressure***

**10.1 Numerator:** The number of persons aged 16+ in a sample survey of the health of the population of England with high blood pressure. The term "high blood pressure" is used to refer to those who are hypertensive i.e. with a systolic blood pressure equal to or greater than 140 mmHg and / or a diastolic blood pressure equal to or greater than 90mmHg, whether or not currently taking prescribed drugs for blood pressure (hypertensive treated and hypertensive untreated); as well as those with a blood pressure readings below the above thresholds, but who are currently taking prescribed drugs for blood pressure (normotensive treated). The blood pressure reading is a mean of three measurements taken on the right arm with the informant in a seated position after five minutes' rest, using an automated device. The counts include all adults with a valid blood pressure reading and data on medication specifically prescribed for controlling blood pressure. The systolic and diastolic blood pressure thresholds for hypertension were changed in the HSE series in 1998 from 160/95 to 140/90 mmHg in accordance with the latest World Health Organisation guidelines. The inclusion of the criterion of the use of prescribed medication for the control of hypertension in the revised HSE definition has meant that it is not possible to calculate high blood pressure prevalence rates for the period before 1998 in a way consistent with the current definition.

**10.2 Denominator:** Respondents (with a valid blood pressure reading and data on medication) aged 16+ in a sample survey of the health of the population of England. The Health Survey for England is a series of annual surveys that began in 1991 with the aim of monitoring the health of the population. It was designed to be representative of the general, non-institutional population living in England. The current 'full' sample size of the Health Survey for England comprises about 16,000 adults aged 16 and over. For each participant, the survey included an interview and a physical examination by a nurse, at which various physical measurements, tests and samples of blood and saliva were collected. These measurements provided biomedical information about known risk factors associated with disease and objective validation for self-reported health behaviour.