



## Global Report on Hypertension

**For Prelims:** [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), [Hypertension](#), [India Hypertension Control Initiative Program \(IHCI\)](#)

**For Mains:** Hypertension and its implications on public health, Universal Health Coverage.

**Source:** DTE

### Why in News?

Recently, during the [United Nations General Assembly's \(UNGA\) 78<sup>th</sup> session](#), the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) released a report titled "**Global report on hypertension: The race against a silent killer.**"

- It is the **first-ever report by the WHO on the worldwide implications of hypertension**, commonly referred to as high blood pressure.

### What are the Key Highlights of the Report?

- **A Global Epidemic:**
  - **One in three adults** across the world suffers from hypertension.
  - The number of hypertension cases has **doubled from 650 million to a staggering 1.3 billion between 1990 and 2019.**
  - Hypertension affects **approximately 33% of adults aged 30-79 worldwide.**
  - Approximately **four out of every five people with hypertension are not adequately treated.**
- **India's Hypertension Burden:**
  - **India alone has an estimated 188.3 million adults** aged 30-79 years grappling with hypertension.
  - The prevalence of **high blood pressure in India is slightly lower than the global average of 31%.**
  - To reach a **50% control rate**, India needs to ensure that an additional **67 million people with hypertension receive effective treatment.**
    - If the progress scenario were achieved, **4.6 million deaths due to high blood pressure would be averted by 2040.**
- **Inadequate Treatment:**
  - About **80%** of individuals with hypertension **do not receive adequate treatment.**
    - Effective hypertension treatment has the potential to **prevent 76 million deaths, 120 million strokes, 79 million heart attacks, and 17 million cases of heart failure by 2050.**
- **Disparities in Treatment Coverage:**
  - Treatment coverage for hypertension exhibits significant disparities among countries, with **high-income nations having a more favourable coverage rate.**
    - The WHO region of the **US leads with a 60% coverage rate, while the African**

region lags behind at 27%.

- **More than three-quarters** of adults with hypertension **live in low- and middle-income countries.**

▪ **The Urgency of Timely Treatment:**

- Nearly **30% of individuals with uncontrolled hypertension** exhibit blood pressure measurements above the **threshold warranting urgent treatment.**
  - Globally, the percentage of **adults aged 30-70 taking medication for hypertension has doubled from 22% in 1990 to 42% in 2019.**
- Effective **treatment coverage has quadrupled** during the same period, reaching **21%.**

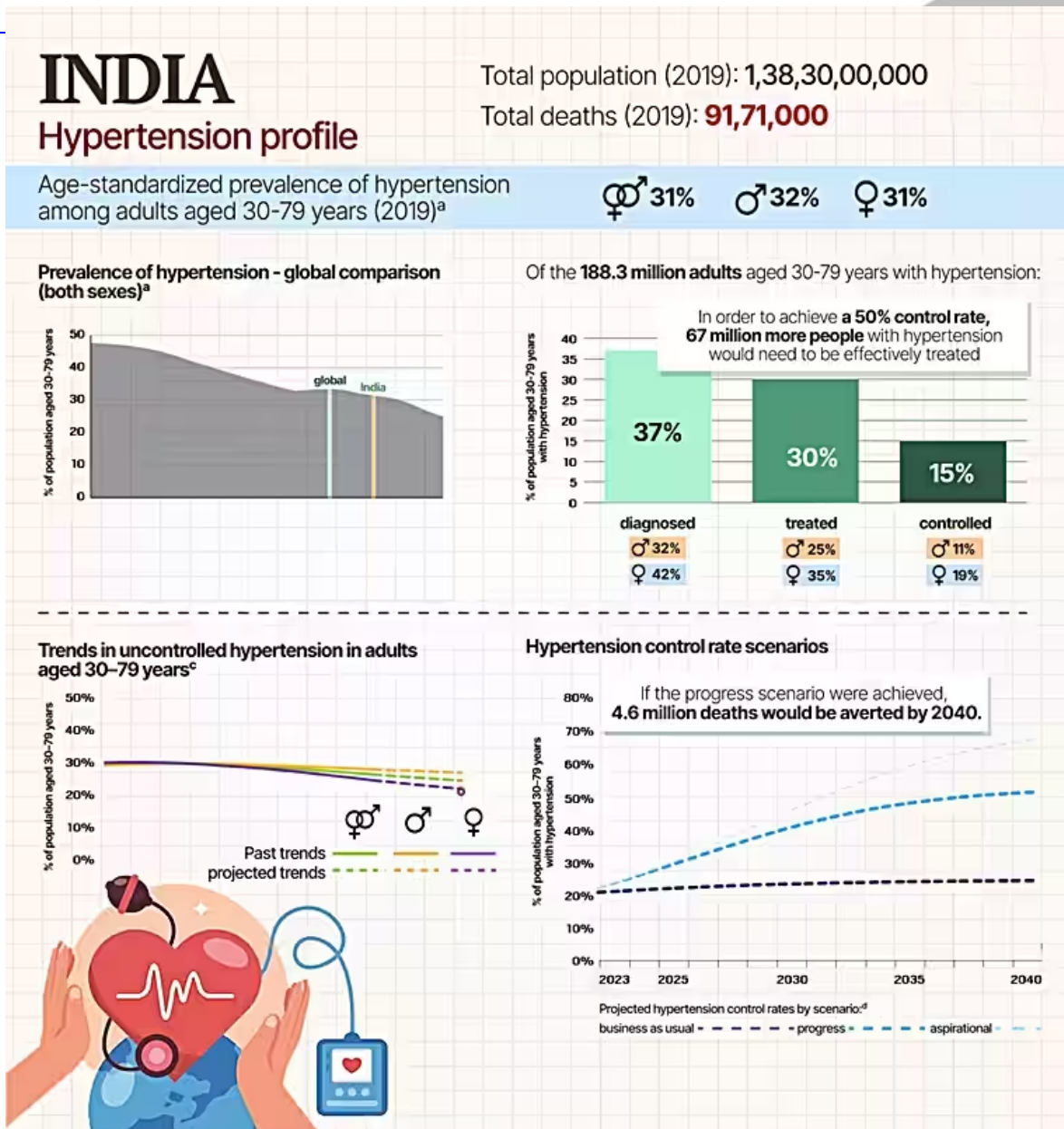
▪ **The WHO's Call to Action:**

- The WHO calls for prioritising the **prevention, early detection, and effective management of hypertension** as part of national health benefit packages.

▪ **Recommendations:**

- There is a need to strengthen hypertension control programs that remain **under-prioritized and acutely underfunded.**
- Strengthening hypertension control must **become an integral part of every country's journey toward [universal health coverage.](#)**

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**What is Hypertension?**

- **About:**
  - Hypertension (high blood pressure) is when the **pressure in your blood vessels is too high (140/90 mmHg or higher)**. It is common but can be serious if not treated.
    - Blood pressure is written as two numbers.
      - **The first (systolic) number represents the pressure in blood vessels** when the heart contracts or beats.
      - The **second (diastolic) number** represents the pressure in the vessels when the heart rests between beats.
  - [World Hypertension Day](#) is celebrated on **May 17 every year** to promote awareness about hypertension and encourage people to prevent and control this silent killer.
- **Risk Factors:**
  - High-salt diets, lack of physical activity, and excessive alcohol consumption are significant contributors to hypertension, and **genetics are believed to play a role in high blood pressure as well.**
- **Symptoms:**
  - **Most people with hypertension don't feel any symptoms.** Very high blood pressure can cause headaches, blurred vision, chest pain and other symptoms.
- **Complications of Uncontrolled Hypertension:**
  - **Severe heart issues**, including chest pain, heart attacks, heart failure, and irregular heartbeats, as well as increase the risk of stroke by affecting blood flow to the brain.
- **Treatment:**
  - **Lifestyle changes** like adopting a low-salt diet, weight loss, physical activity, and quitting tobacco etc. and **medications.**
- **Initiatives:**
  - **Global:**
    - To achieve the **global target to reduce the prevalence of hypertension by 25% by 2025**, WHO and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention launched the Global Hearts Initiative in 2016.
    - The [United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 \(SDG 3\)](#) aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all.
  - **India:**
    - [India Hypertension Control Initiative Program \(IHCI\)](#):
      - Through programmes such as IHCI and the government's push towards **non-communicable disease** screening and treatment at the primary healthcare level, **India aims to put 75 million patients with hypertension or diabetes on standard care by 2025.**