



Unpublished Data Shows Link Between Pandemic & Worsening Health Conditions

About This Report

Diabetes and hypertension are complicated, costly diseases that in most cases can be prevented or treated effectively if the warning signs are recognized and heeded early enough. During the pandemic these metabolic diseases have been overshadowed by concerns directly related to COVID-19, and unfortunately, they have worsened.

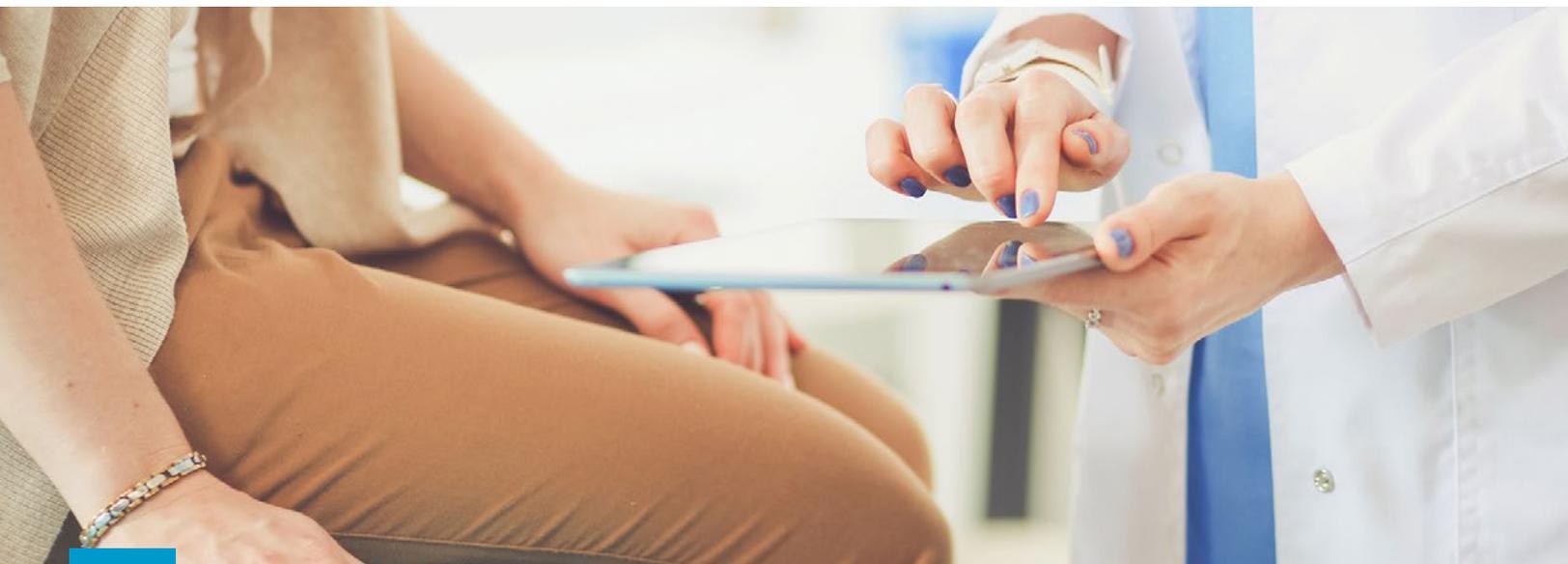
The Situation

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [1 out of every 4 dollars](#) in U.S. healthcare costs is spent on caring for people with diabetes. The American Diabetes Association reports that on average, medical expenses of people with diabetes are more than two times higher than they would be if they didn't have diabetes. Even before COVID, diabetes was disrupting the lives of more than [34 million Americans](#), including more than 7 million who are undiagnosed. Since 1958, the percentage of Americans with diagnosed diabetes has grown from less than 1% ([0.93%](#)) to more than [10.5%](#). In regards to COVID, those with diabetes [are three times](#) more likely to develop severe complications if they get the disease. In fact, diabetics make up 40% of all COVID deaths in America, despite accounting for only 10.5% of the population.

The CDC also reports that nearly [half of all adults](#) in the United States have hypertension, and Catapult's current data indicates that the number is even higher than that. A recent study published by the American Heart Association reported that adults with hypertension pay almost [\\$2,000](#) more in annual healthcare costs than those without high blood pressure. Hypertension is the [most commonly](#) shared pre-existing condition among those who are hospitalized with COVID.

Catapult Analysis

Catapult Health analyzed data from almost 820,000 medical records, comparing data from patients seen prior to the pandemic and since the pandemic began. The study includes 183,647 patients seen since April 1, 2020. Many facets of health and health determinants were studied – lipids, tobacco use, alcohol use, sleep disturbances, physical activity, preventive care, and depression – but two conditions showed more significant changes than the others. This brief document highlights what we uncovered.



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Those with diabetes are **three times more likely to develop severe complications if they get COVID**

Diabetics make up **40% of all COVID deaths** in America

Half of all adults in the United States have **hypertension**

Adults with hypertension pay almost **\$2,000 more in annual healthcare costs** than those without high blood pressure

Diabetes

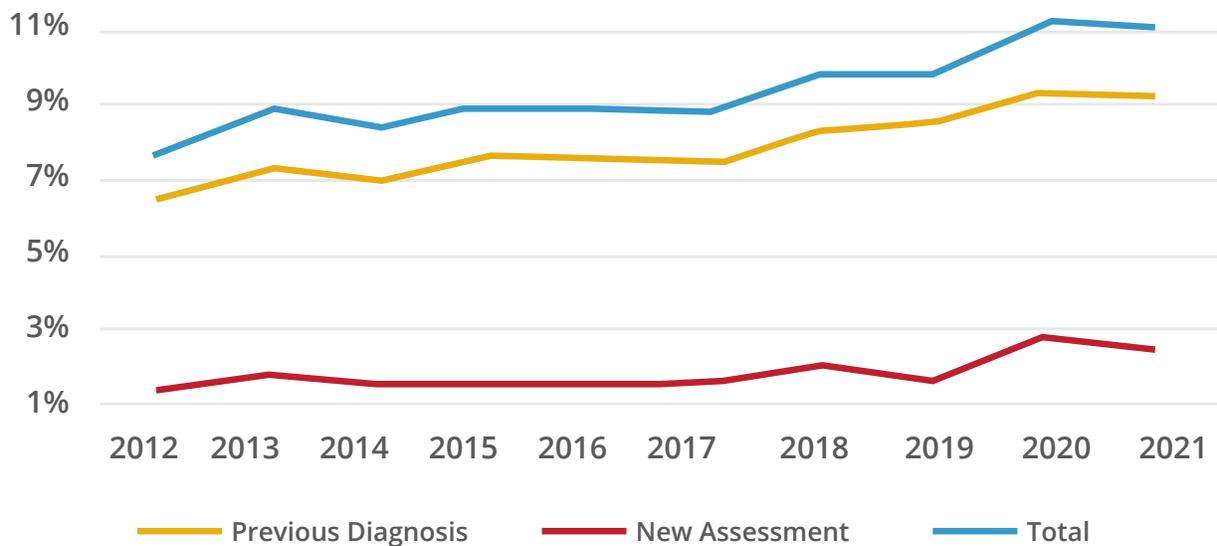


Three areas related to diabetes that Catapult watches closely are the percentage of patients who have a previous diagnosis of diabetes, the percentage of those who are effectively managing their disease, and the percentage of patients who learn for the first time that they likely have diabetes (pending additional testing). The table and chart below demonstrate the steady increase in both previous diagnoses and new assessments since Catapult began providing preventive care in 2012, with a notable jump in both rates in 2020. The rate of those with a previous diagnosis of diabetes and an HbA1c $\geq 7.0\%$, considered uncontrolled, has remained at approximately 50% through the years.

	Previous Diagnosis	New Assessment	Total
2012	6.6%	1.4%	7.9%
2013	7.3%	1.8%	9.0%
2014	7.2%	1.6%	8.6%
2015	7.6%	1.5%	8.9%
2016	7.7%	1.5%	9.0%
2017	7.7%	1.5%	9.0%
2018	8.5%	1.9%	10.0%
2019	8.7%	1.7%	10.0%
2020	9.3%	2.7%	11.4%
2021	9.4%	2.5%	11.3%

*New Assessment: no previous diagnosis of diabetes and fasting glucose ≥ 126 mg/dL or HbA1c $\geq 6.5\%$

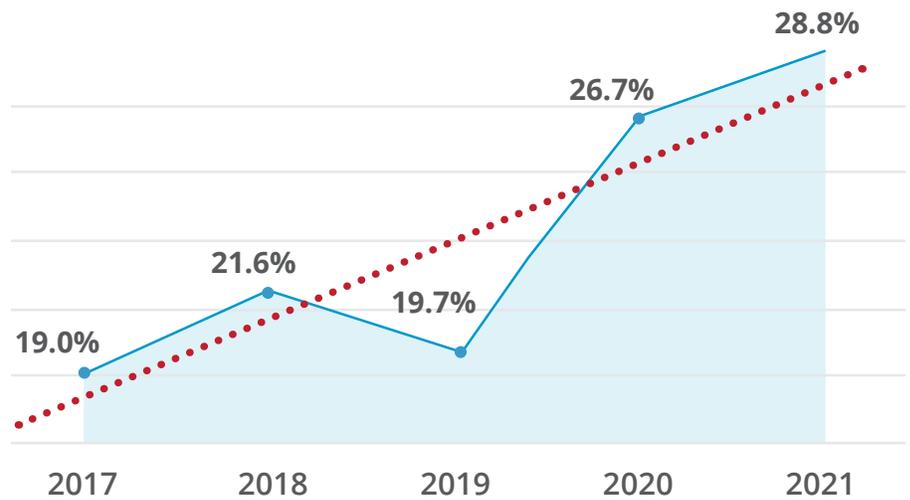
Catapult Patients - Prevalence of Diabetes



Pre-Diabetes

Because pre-diabetes is a frequent precursor for type 2 diabetes (as well as heart disease and stroke), Catapult monitors changes in rates of this serious health condition. About 1 in 3 Americans have pre-diabetes, and more than 84% of them don't know they have it. For years we have seen high rates among our older patients, but for the first time more than 20% of our younger patients have pre-diabetes.

Rates of Pre-Diabetes by Year



Note: Since more than 95% of all cases of diabetes Catapult encounters are type 2, we have not distinguished between type 1 and type 2 data in this analysis.



Hypertension



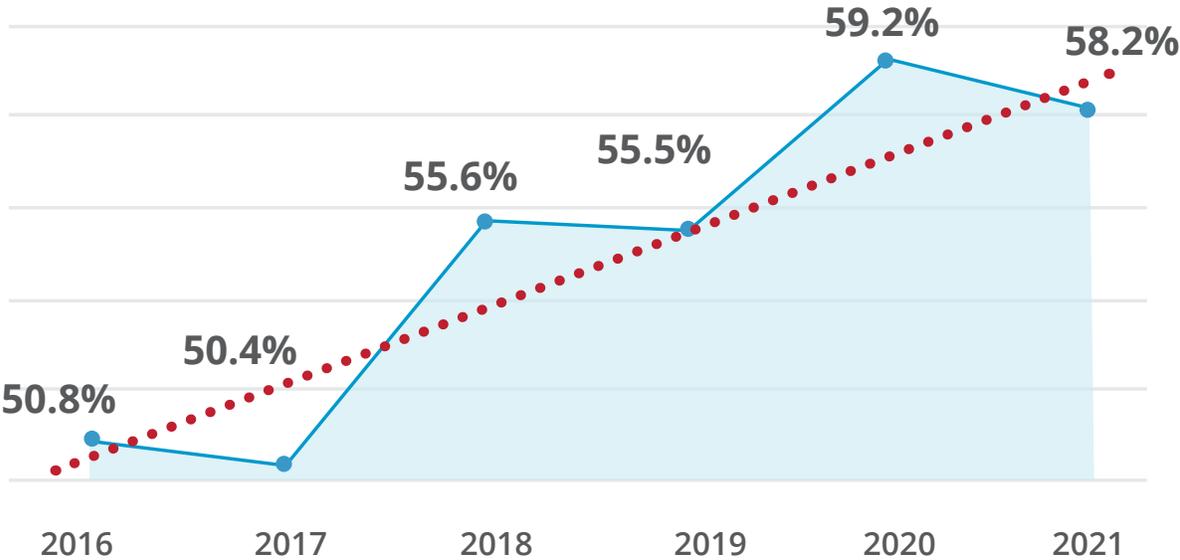
The “silent killer” became even more silent, and likely more deadly during the pandemic.

Similar to diabetes, Catapult closely tracks the percentage of patients who have a previous diagnosis of hypertension, the percentage of those who are effectively managing their disease, and the percentage of patients who learn for the first time that they likely have hypertension (pending additional testing.)

The table and chart on this page show the percentage of Catapult patients with a previous diagnosis or newly assessed since 2017 when the American Heart Association redefined the criteria for hypertension.

	Previous Diagnosis	New Assessment	Total
2017	25.0%	25.4%	50.4%
2018	26.8%	28.8%	55.6%
2019	27.0%	28.6%	55.5%
2020	29.4%	29.8%	59.2%
2021	29.8%	28.5%	58.2%

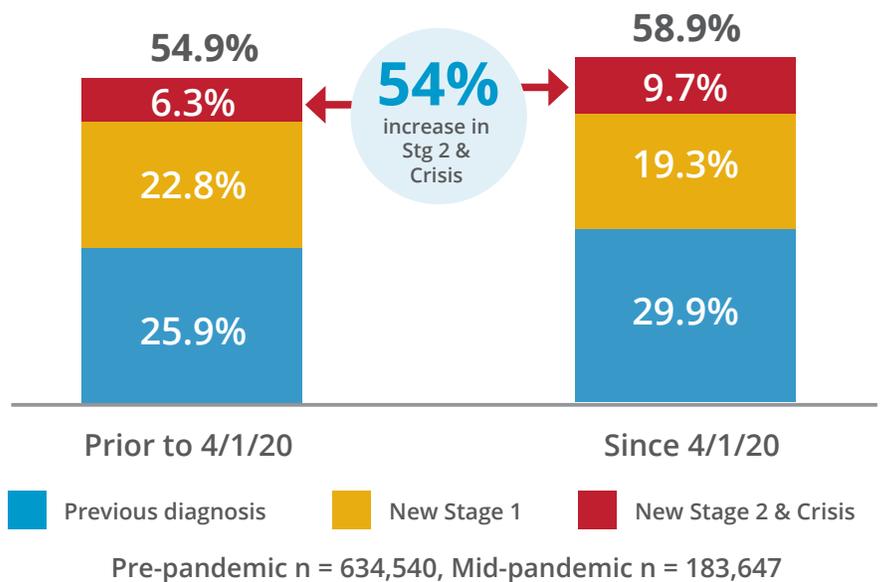
Rates of Hypertension by Year





Prevalence of Hypertension among Catapult Patients

One of the more troubling findings was the rapid increase of patients with stage 2 or crisis hypertension. These are the two most severe stages of hypertension, which can lead to heart attack or stroke. When a patient is discovered with hypertensive crisis, emergency medical care is necessary.



BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC	AND/OR	DIASTOLIC
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Elevated	120-129	and	Less than 80
Hypertension Stage 1	130-139	or	80-89
Hypertension Stage 2	140 or higher	or	90 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 120

The percentage of those with a previous diagnosis who are not effectively managing their blood pressure has hovered around the 30% mark for the last three years. Hypertension is considered managed if one's blood pressure is < 140/90 for those under 60 and for those 60 and older with diabetes, and < 150/90 for those 60 and older who don't have diabetes.

Tips for Employers



Create Awareness

Create awareness about diabetes, pre-diabetes, and hypertension, including the consequences of not preventing/managing it. Use existing communication channels – HR website, newsletters, flyers, email, company Facebook, etc. Recognize the impact the diseases are having on your company. Create awareness of that impact among your leadership team.



Know Your Numbers

Encourage employees and spouses/partners to know their numbers. Most people with diabetes or hypertension don't feel bad. The only way to know one's status is a blood test or blood pressure check.



Physical Activity

Encourage physical activity and healthy eating for everyone, and for those who need it, provide resources to lose and manage weight.



Remove Barriers

Many people who have been prescribed medication for diabetes or hypertension do not follow their plan of care, some due to costs. For those with diabetes or hypertension, remove the barrier of treatment cost. Adjust your pharmacy plan design to remove out-of-pocket expenses for related medications and test strips.



About Catapult HEALTH

Catapult Health is a national preventive care medical provider operating in all 50 states. Catapult works with more than 400 employers serving 2 million employee and dependent lives. Our VirtualCheckup provides employees with annual wellness checkups including diagnostic screenings available onsite, at Quest locations or via a provided home kit.

Each checkup includes completion of a health questionnaire, blood chemistry analysis, physical measurements, evaluation of current medications, and consultation with a board-certified Catapult Nurse Practitioner, who asks questions to gain a deeper understanding of each patient's health, needs, barriers, and opportunities for improvement. The NP also has visibility to the prescription refill history from the previous 12 months for each patient, which allows them to consult on medication adherence and possible medication misuse. Checkups also include a review of cancer screenings, vaccinations, and gaps in care related to previous diagnoses.

A personal health plan is developed for each patient, who has access to all findings in a private, secure online personal health record. Patients are referred to resources offered by their employer and health plan, such as health management, disease management, care management, and wellness programs. Each patient's test results and gaps in care are securely transmitted to their PCP within hours of their Catapult checkup.

Since its initial clinics in 2011, Catapult has focused on identifying health patterns, health histories, and biometric values that would indicate physical diseases, including diabetes, hypertension, lipid disorders and morbid obesity. In 2017, Catapult expanded its focus to include depression and suicidal ideation screening.

Contact Us

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