

Advancing Cardiovascular Health of Early Midlife African American Women Through Science and Discovery

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From Clinical Practice to Scientific Milestones



PubMed



Supplemental
award
Award No.
0000071727

2003-2019
Clinical practice

2018 Funded NIH/NINR
grant #
(1F31NR017348-01A1)

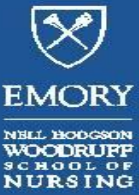
Journal of Cardiovascular
Nursing, Journal of Clinical
Hypertension 2018-2020

2019-2021 T32 METRIC
Postdoctoral Fellowship
CV/Social epidemiology

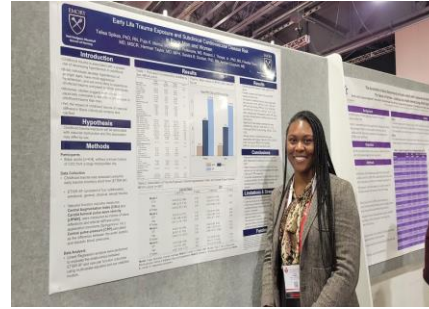
04/2023 Notice of
Award NIH/NINR
1K23NR020631-01A1

09/2025 Notice of Award
NIH/NINR 3K23NR020631-
03S1

From Clinical Practice to Scientific Milestones



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JOURNAL ARTICLE

Biological Age as a Predictor of Arterial Stiffness in Young and Early Midlife Black and White Women

Telisa A Spikes, Alvaro Alonso, Roland J Thorpe, Jr, Jordan Pelkmans, Melinda Higgins, Samaah Sullivan, Sandra B Dunbar, Vasiliki Michopoulos, Charles Searles, Tené T Lewis ... Show more

American Journal of Hypertension, Volume 38, Issue 9, September 2025, Pages 706-713, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ajh/hpaf059>

Published: 22 April 2025 Article history



Qualitative interviews

2023-2025 Study recruitment

Scientific talks AHA 2023

Community based recruitment with mentees

Specimen processing, community based participatory research talk

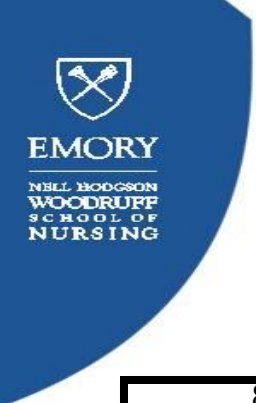
Scientific talk AHA Scientific Sessions 2024

T. Spikes, et al. (2025). JAMA

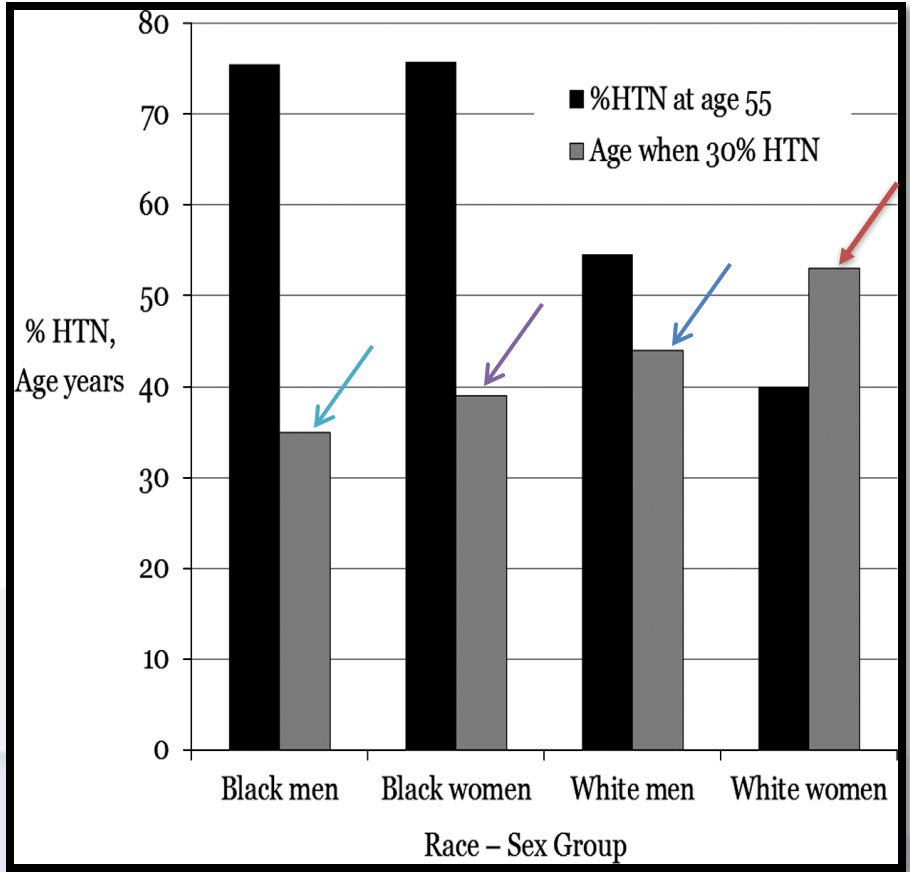
T. Spikes, et al. (2025) American Journal of Hypertension. Data cleaning and analyses, dissemination of findings.

Participant interviews, Dissemination of findings, prepare for R-level application

Participant interviews, Dissemination of findings, prepare for R-level application



Addressing the Burden of Hypertension in Early Midlife African American Women



- The burden of HTN in Black adults is significant and growing public health concern.
- Leading risk factor for the development of cardiovascular disease.
- 30% of Black men and women had developed HTN by age 35 & 39
- Age of onset for White men and women was 44 and 53 years old.

Hypertension and African American Women

- 43% versus 27%
- Twice as likely to die from cardiovascular disease
- Unfavorable socioeconomic profiles
- High-risk psychosocial profiles
 - Greater burden of socially-derived chronic stressors
 - Higher inflammation
 - Maladaptive coping responses
- CVD morbidity and mortality

Health United States, 2018. Table 22.

Felix, A., et al. *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes*. 2019;12(4):1-14.

McIntosh, K. et al., *Examining the Black-White Wealth Gap*. The Brookings Institution. 2020



Accelerated aging and CVD risk

- When biological age outpaces chronological age, the body keeps the score. I'm focused on slowing that clock for Black women in their 30s and 40s





K23: The Contribution of Chronic Stress and Resilience on Biological and Vascular Aging in Early Midlife Black Women

- Accelerated physiological aging as a key link to early-onset hypertension and CVD burden among early midlife African American women.
- Inflammation is a common-denominator.
- Cohort of Healthy African American women 30-44 years of age.
- Multiple markers of aging-biological and vascular methods.
 - Clinical assays
 - Epigenetic clocks





Research in Progress

- Nearing completion of data collection
 - quantitative
 - qualitative data completed.
- Data analysis
- Transdisciplinary research team [clinician investigators, epidemiologist, health psychologist, neuroscientist]
- Writing, Writing, Writing
- Dissemination of findings

