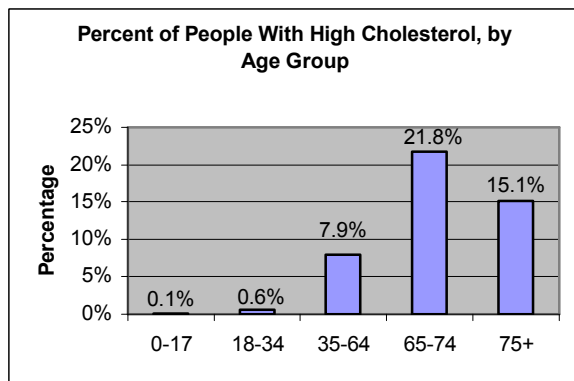


## High Cholesterol: Common Comorbidities

### Introduction

In 2000, 15 million Americans were estimated to have high cholesterol, making it the fifth most prevalent chronic condition in the United States. One person in eight with a chronic condition has high cholesterol.

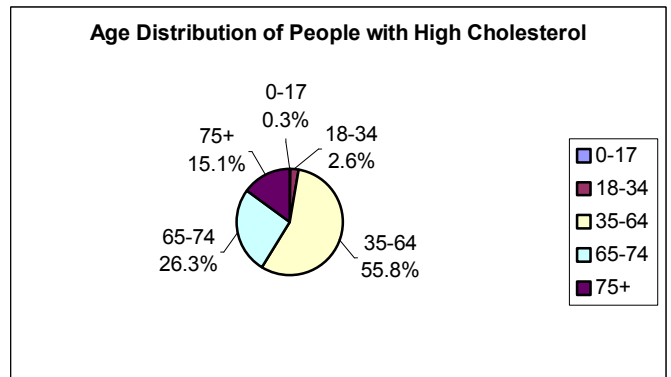
**Figure 1**



### Age Distribution

High cholesterol is a chronic condition that increases in prevalence with age. One person in five in the 65-74 age group, and one person in seven in the 75+ group, has diabetes, while just one person in twelve in the 35-64 age group has diabetes. Prevalence in people under the age of 35 is negligible.

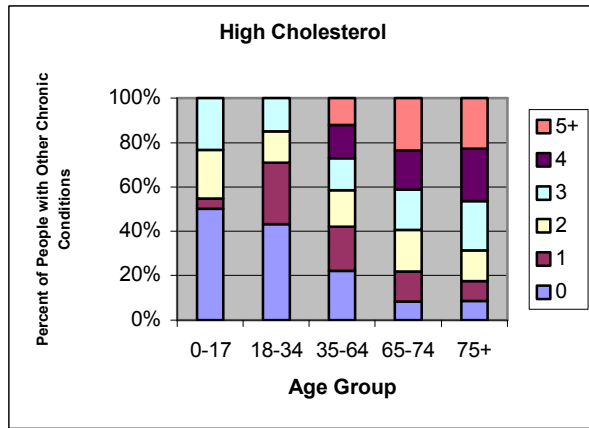
**Figure 2**



### High Cholesterol and Other Chronic Conditions

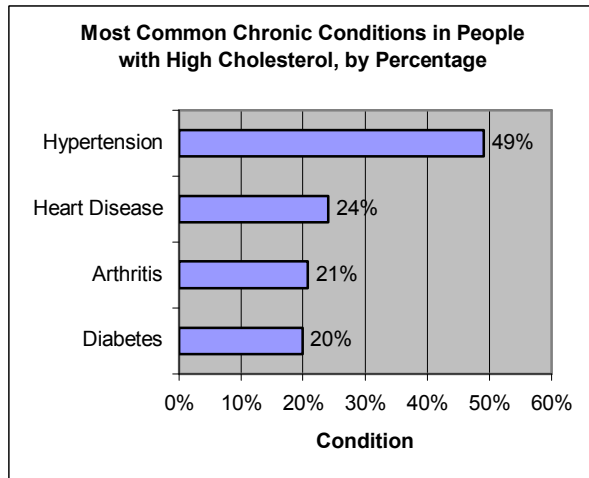
Only one person with high cholesterol in seven has no other chronic conditions. On average, a person with high cholesterol has 3.3 other chronic conditions. There is a positive relationship between age and number of other chronic conditions among people with high cholesterol, as demonstrated in Figure 3. Nearly six people in ten in the 0-17 age group, and seven people in ten in the 18-34 age group, do not have more than one other chronic condition, as compared to just two people in ten people in the 65-74 and 75+ age groups without more than one other chronic condition.

**Figure 3**



The most common comorbid condition for people across all age groups with high cholesterol is hypertension (49%). The next most common comorbid conditions are: heart disease (24%); arthritis (21%); and diabetes (20%).

**Figure 4**



The most common comorbidities vary by age. The most prevalent comorbidity for people in the 0-17 age group is diabetes (27%). Hypertension is the most common

comorbid condition for people in the 18-34 age group (23%), the 35-64 age group (43%), the 65-74 age group (60%), and the 75+ age group (58%).

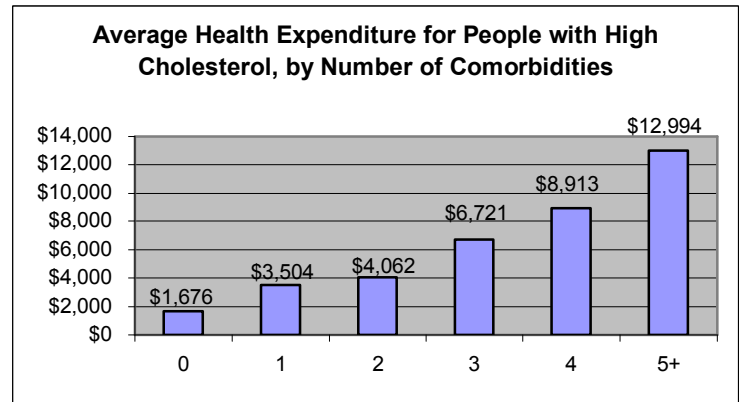
**Table 1**

Age Group	Most Common Comorbidity (%)	Second-Most Common Comorbidity (%)
0-17	Diabetes (27%)	Affective Disorders (27%)
18-34	Hypertension (23%)	Chronic Respiratory Infections (13%)
35-64	Hypertension (43%)	Diabetes (17%)
65-74	Hypertension (60%)	Heart Disease (31%)
75+	Hypertension (58%)	Heart Disease (43%)

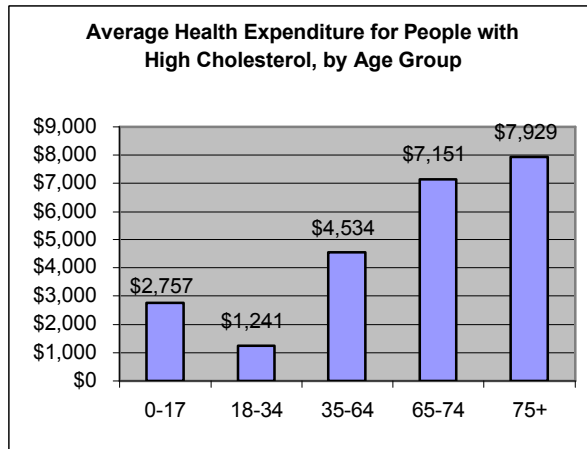
**Costs of High Cholesterol**

The average health expenditure for people with high cholesterol is \$5,645. There is a positive relationship between average expenditure and number of comorbid chronic conditions, as demonstrated in Figure 5.

**Figure 5**



There is also a positive relationship between average expenditure and age, as demonstrated in Figure 6.

**Figure 6**

### About Partnership for Solutions

Partnership for solutions, led by Johns Hopkins University and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is an initiative to improve the care and quality of life for the estimated 125 million Americans with chronic health conditions. The Partnership is engaged in three major activities conducting original research and identifying existing research that clarifies the nature of the problem; communicating these research findings to policymakers, business leaders, health professionals, advocates, and others; and working with public and private programs to identify promising solutions to the problems faced by people with chronic conditions.