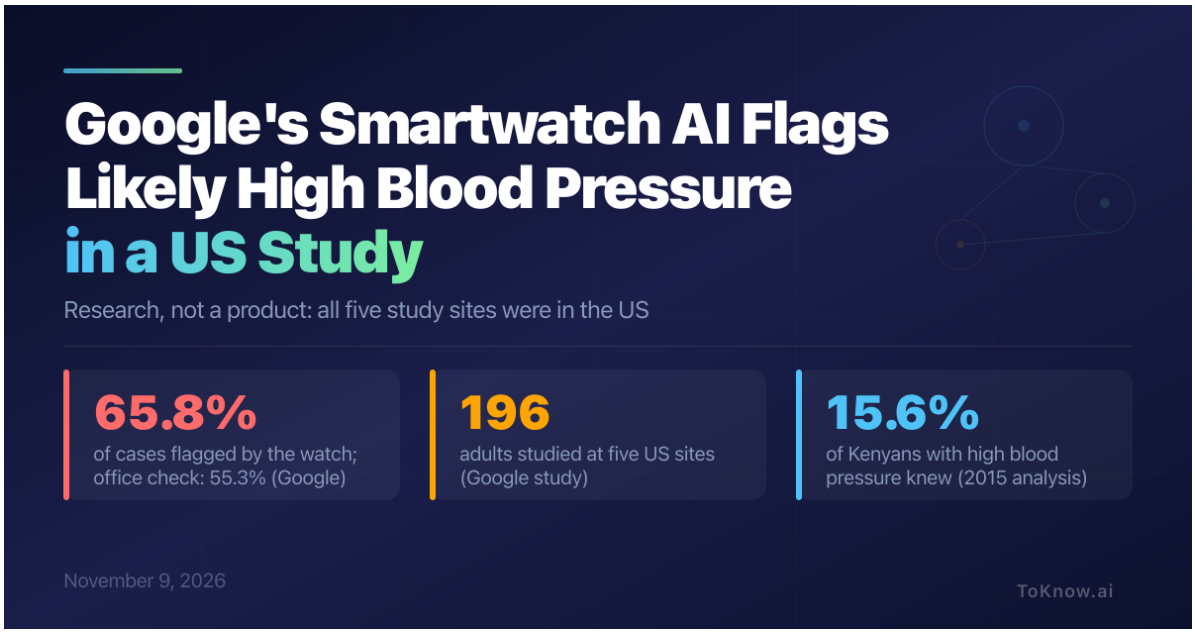
Google's Smartwatch AI Flags Likely High Blood Pressure in a US Study

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Google researchers trained an AI model to flag people who probably have high blood pressure (hypertension), which rarely causes symptoms. It reads a smartwatch's light sensor (tracking blood flow at the wrist) and motion sensor. This is research, not a product: Google calls it "early feasibility research" and says it is "not indicative of any existing or upcoming commercial product feature." In the Google-funded Nature study, 196 US adults wore a Pixel Watch 3 (per

the preprint) for about seven days. Checked against a 24-hour arm-cuff monitor, the watch flagged 65.8% of the people who had hypertension, about two in three. One office check flagged 55.3%, though the ranges overlap. About four in five of those the watch flagged (80.6%) had it.

Kenya's 2015 national survey found hypertension in 24.5% of adults aged 18 to 69, and only 15.6% of them knew. A second analysis of the same survey puts awareness at 29.4%. A watch many people already wear could prompt a cuff check, if it works. This study does not show that. It ran at five US sites with one watch model and left out people with known heart or blood-vessel disease or on blood pressure medicine. Only 196 of 296 enrolled people had enough data, mostly from missing monitor readings. The authors found no link between errors and skin tone (35.2% had dark skin tones). In Kenya, the Ministry of Health says 44% of health facilities lack the capacity to diagnose and treat hypertension, The Star reports.

Read More: another AI screening study, reading risk factors such as blood pressure from a routine eye photo and a county-by-county count of Kenya's licensed health facilities in 2025

Sources:

- Opportunistically Detecting Signs of Hypertension on a Consumer Smartwatch (Nature)
- Detecting signs of hypertension using wearable sensors (Google Research)
- Opportunistically Detecting Signs of Hypertension on a Consumer Smartwatch (medRxiv preprint)
- Prevalence, awareness, treatment and control of hypertension: national survey in Kenya (BMC Public Health)
- One in four Kenyan adults living with hypertension, WHO warns (The Star)

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