**S1 Figure.** Definition of time periods used to define the cohort and follow-up periods.



Patients were eligible at cohort entry if they were aged 40 years or older, registered at a linked, “up-to-standard” general practice, had records available after the study start date (1st January 1998), had no previous prescription of antihypertensive therapy and a single systolic blood pressure reading between 130-179 mm Hg