



## High Blood Pressure

### What is high blood pressure?

Your heart needs to pump blood through your body to supply it with oxygen and nutrients. The pressure that we measure is how hard the heart pushes against the walls of your blood vessels.

We use two numbers to show blood pressure.

- The top (systolic) number tells the pressure when your heart squeezes and pumps blood.
- The bottom (diastolic) number tells the pressure when your heart relaxes between beats.



A healthy blood pressure is under 120/80, which we read as “one-twenty over eighty.”

| Blood Pressure   | Status                        | What should I do?   |
|------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Under 120/80     | Healthy                       | Exercise and eat healthy to make sure that your blood pressure does not get higher.   |
| 120/80 to 139/89 | At Risk<br>(Pre-hypertension) | You do not have high blood pressure yet, but you have a greater chance of getting it. |
| 140/90 or higher | High<br>(Hypertension)        | See a health provider. Use our tips to learn ways to lower it.                        |

### What does high blood pressure do?

It is a silent killer. You may have high blood pressure for years without knowing it because there may not be any symptoms. It can be a danger because it causes your heart to work harder. This can increase the chance of stroke, heart attack, heart failure, kidney disease, or other permanent health problems.





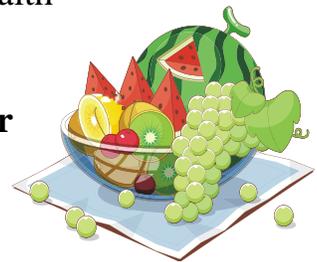
## Who is at risk?

You are more likely to have high blood pressure if you have family members with it. Some medicines, stress, aging, illness, and even pregnancy can raise blood pressure. Smoking and being obese can also lead to it. African Americans are more likely to have high blood pressure.

## How can I lower my blood pressure?

You can control high blood pressure with healthy habits. Your health provider may prescribe medicine to lower blood pressure.

**Check your blood pressure once a week at the grocery store or drug store.** Use the form that we give you to keep track of your blood pressure at home and bring it with you every time you visit the clinic. Follow the advice of your health provider.



Tips for healthy habits:



- 1. Eat less salty food.** Check food labels for high sodium.
- 2. Exercise most days** for at least 30 minutes.
- 3. Keep a healthy weight.** Use our body mass index (BMI) chart.
- 4. Quit smoking.** Call 1-877-822-6669 to get help.
- 5. Drink less alcohol.** Men should drink no more than 2 drinks per day and women should drink no more than 1 drink per day.
- 6. Avoid stress.** Do something pleasant every day and pay attention to it instead of the worry or sad thoughts.

Please read our 2Tips page and watch our video for more tips.

## More Resources

The American Heart Association (<http://www.heart.org>)

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>)

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure>)