

KNOW THE BLOOD PRESSURE BASICS

High blood pressure (hypertension) can harm heart and brain health and often has no symptoms. It damages blood vessels and can increase your risk of heart attack and stroke. It can also increase the risk of dementia, especially in middle age.

Blood pressure is typically recorded as two numbers, written as a ratio like this: 117/76 mm Hg. Read as "117 over 76" millimeters of mercury.

» **Systolic:** The top number, the higher of the two numbers, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart beats (when the heart muscle contracts).

» **Diastolic:** The bottom number, the lower of the two numbers, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart is resting between heart beats.

High blood pressure must be confirmed by a health care professional. Different life stages such as pregnancy and menopause can affect blood pressure levels.

You can track your blood pressure at home with a validated blood pressure device. Some pharmacies, health clinics and fire stations offer free monitoring.

Blood Pressure Categories

» **Normal:** systolic less than 120 mm Hg and diastolic less than 80 mm Hg.

» **Elevated:** systolic 120 to 129 mm Hg and diastolic less than 80 mm Hg.

» **STAGE 1 Hypertension (High Blood Pressure):** systolic 130 to 139 mm Hg or diastolic 80 to 89 mm Hg.

» **STAGE 2 Hypertension (High Blood Pressure):** systolic 140 mm Hg or higher or diastolic 90 mm Hg or higher.

» **SEVERE HYPERTENSION (If you don't have symptoms*, call your health care professional):** systolic higher than 180 mm Hg and/or diastolic higher than 120 mm Hg.

» **HYPERTENSIVE EMERGENCY (If you have symptoms*, call 911):** systolic higher than 180 mm Hg and /or diastolic higher than 120 mm Hg.

**symptoms: chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, numbness, weakness, change in vision, or difficulty speaking*

SECRETS FOR SUCCESS

Remember these tips to help you stay on track with your blood pressure goals.

» EAT SMART

Eat a healthy diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, and lean animal proteins like fish and seafood. Limit sugary foods and drinks, red or processed meats, salty foods, refined carbohydrates and highly processed foods.

» MOVE MORE

Physical activity helps control blood pressure, weight and stress

» STAY WELL WITH WEIGHT

If you're overweight, even a 5% weight loss can reduce high blood pressure.

» DON'T BE TOXIC

Every time you smoke, vape or use tobacco, the nicotine can cause a temporary increase in blood pressure.

» SLEEP LIKE A STAR

Short sleep (less than 7 hours a night) and poor-quality sleep are associated with high blood pressure.



GO RED TOGETHER

Help other women know the basics of blood pressure by starting a monitoring routine with a friend and encourage each other to keep your levels in check.

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