

Hypertension

Many people have high blood pressure but feel just fine. Early on it can cause damages to your body while you have no symptoms, but untreated can lead to stroke, heart failure, and kidney failure. Hypertension can affect every organ. The good news is there are ways you can prevent high blood pressure and the problems it can cause.

What is high blood pressure?

Blood pressured is recorded as two numbers which represent the pressure of blood against the walls of your vessels. The systolic pressure, the higher number, is the pressure in the vessel as the heart contracts and pushes blood into the vessel. The diastolic pressure is when the heart relaxes and is the minimum pressure in the vessel. If either the systolic or diastolic pressures are elevated, you are considered to be hypertensive.

What does your blood pressure mean?

Blood Pressure	Meaning	Action
Less than 120/80	Blood Pressure is normal	Maintain healthy lifestyle
Between 120/80 and 140/90	Considered pre-hypertensive and are at risk of high blood pressure	Visit with your doctor. They may recommend lifestyle changes
Greater than 130/80 AND you have Diabetes or chronic kidney disease	Blood pressure is considered hypertensive	Visit with your doctor. Lifestyle changes and blood pressure medications are important.
Greater than 140/90	Blood pressure is considered hypertensive	Visit with your doctor. Lifestyle changes and blood pressure medications are important.



What are the risk factors for hypertension?

- Age
- Males
- Stress
- Obesity
- Race: African Americans, Hispanics
- Diet: high salt
- Smoking

How can you prevent hypertension?

- Keep a healthy weight.
- Exercise 30 minutes a day for 5 days a week. Check with your doctor before beginning an exercise plan.
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low fat dairy foods.
- Cut down on salt.
- No tobacco.
- Cut down on liquor, beer, wine.
- Have regular visits with your doctor.

How do I manage my high blood pressure?

- Lifestyle modifications
- Your physician may prescribe medications. Take them as prescribed. Tell your physician about all medications, supplements, or herbal remedies you may be taking.

Information on high blood pressure can be found at:

www.nhlbi.nih.gov

www.nia.nih.gov

