



## Take Ownership of Managing Your Blood Pressure

**Congratulations!** By using this tool, you've taken the first step to managing your blood pressure.

High blood pressure puts stress on the heart, lungs, brain, kidneys, and blood vessels. Over time, this condition can damage these organs and tissues and can lead to heart disease, heart attack, stroke, or even kidney failure.

### How To Read Your Blood Pressure

Blood pressure measurements are read as two numbers:

1. **Systolic Pressure:** higher number, normal reading is 120 mmHg or less.
2. **Diastolic Pressure:** lower number, normal reading is 80 mmHg or less.

High blood pressure is defined as systolic pressure greater than 140 mmHg and/or diastolic pressure greater than 90 mmHg. You are considered prehypertensive if your systolic blood pressure is between 120-139 mmHg, or your diastolic pressure is between 80-89 mmHg.

#### Symptoms

High blood pressure usually does not cause symptoms, but the condition can still damage your organs and tissues.

If blood pressure reaches extreme levels, you may experience the following:

- ✓ Headache
- ✓ Blurry or double vision
- ✓ Abdominal pain
- ✓ Chest pain
- ✓ Shortness of breath
- ✓ Dizziness

#### Treatment & Prevention

- ✓ Maintain a healthy weight. (Your body mass index should be below 25).
- ✓ Begin a safe exercise program with the advice of your doctor.
- ✓ If you smoke, quit.
- ✓ Eat a healthful diet, one that is low-fat, low salt, and rich in fiber, fruits, and vegetables. Your doctor may recommend the DASH diet, which is designed to reduce blood pressure.
- ✓ Drink alcohol in moderation.
- ✓ Manage stress
- ✓ Medications

*Disclaimer: "As important as this health indicator is, blood pressure screening is not a mechanism for diagnosing or treating a disease. It is not a replacement for regular medical examinations. We encourage you to speak promptly with your healthcare provider about your blood pressure after your screening." Please consult your primary care physician, insurance company or local health department if your blood pressure measurements are higher than the normal levels - systolic pressure 120 mmHg and diastolic pressure 80 mmHg.*

# MANAGING MY BLOOD PRESSURE

This tool can help you take ownership of managing your blood pressure.

Your blood pressure reading measures the force of blood as it presses against the walls of your arteries. It is made up of two numbers that measure your heart when it's pumping and when it is at rest.

**Systolic** blood pressure (the top number) represents the pressure while the heart is beating.

**A normal, healthy systolic pressure is less than 120.**

**Diastolic** blood pressure (the bottom number) represents the pressure when the heart is resting between beats.

**A normal, healthy diastolic pressure is less than 80.**



## CONTROLLING YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

- Have blood pressure checked regularly
- Keep weight at or below appropriate levels
- Avoid salty foods
- Control alcohol intake
- Take your medicine exactly as prescribed

It's important to discuss your blood pressure with your doctor. Below are some questions to help guide your discussion as well as a note section to keep record of this important conversation. **Here's to a healthier you.**

### Questions to ask your doctor about your blood pressure:

- What is my personal blood pressure goal?
- What can be causing my high blood pressure?
- What dietary or lifestyle changes do I need to make to help lower my blood pressure?
- How frequently should I have my blood pressure checked?
- Can my blood pressure get too low?
- What over-the-counter medications should I avoid?
- What is the long-term safety of the blood pressure medication(s) you have prescribed me?
- What are the medication(s) side effects?
- If side effects occur, what should I do on my own? When should I contact you?
- Can the other medications I am on adversely interact with the blood pressure medications you are prescribing me?

## BLOOD PRESSURE READINGS

DATE	BP	COMMENTS

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