

# Blood Pressure



Most people with high blood pressure have no symptoms at all. There are no specific warning signs. The only way to find out if you have high blood pressure is through regular monitoring.

## What is Blood Pressure?

Blood pressure is the force exerted on the walls of your blood vessels (artery) as blood flows through them.

Your heart is like a pump. When it contracts, or beats, it sends a surge of blood through the blood vessels and pressure increases.. This is called systolic pressure. When your heart relaxes between beats, your blood pressure decreases. This is called your diastolic pressure.

Normal blood pressure falls within a range — it's not one set of numbers. But if you're an adult, it should be less than 140/90 mmHg. If you have diabetes, renal insufficiency or heart failure, your doctor will want it to be no higher than 130/85 mmHg. If your blood pressure goes above this threshold and stays there, you have high blood pressure.

## About Blood Pressure

The 7th report of the Joint National Committee on Prevention Detection, Evaluation and Treatment of High Blood Pressure (JNC 7) from the National Institutes of Health classification is only a general guideline because blood pressure depends on our age, morbidity, and treatment strategy by a physician. **CONSULT YOUR PHYSICIAN TO DETERMINE YOUR NORMAL BLOOD PRESSURE.**



	Systolic (mmHg)	Diastolic (mmHg)
Normal	<120	<80
Hypertension	120—139	80—90
Stage 1 Hypertension	140—159	90—99
Stage 2 Hypertension	>160	>100

## What can you do about high blood pressure?

If you have high blood pressure, you can do a lot to reduce it. Work with your doctors to determine the base treatment for you. It may include a low-fat diet, a low-salt diet, and changes in your living habits such as quitting smoking, losing weight and getting more exercise. Reducing your alcohol intake may be recommended. Many medicines also can help reduce and control high blood pressure. Your doctor will decide whether you need medicine in addition to dietary and lifestyle changes.

**High blood pressure is a lifelong disease. It can be controlled but not cured. Once you begin to manage it and start a treatment program, maintaining a lower blood pressure is easier. By controlling your high blood pressure, you'll lower your risk of diseases like stroke, heart attack, heart failure and kidney disease. You can do it!**

## What does high blood pressure do to your body?

High blood pressure adds to the workload of the heart and arteries. The heart must pump with more force, and the arteries must carry blood that is moving under greater pressure. If high blood pressure continues for a long time, the heart and the arteries may not function as well as they should and other body organs may also be affected. There is increased risk of stroke, heart failure, kidney failure and heart attack.