

Managing High Blood Pressure



High blood pressure, also called hypertension, is a condition that damages blood vessels and can lead to serious health problems. It's known as a silent killer because you may not have any noticeable symptoms, and if left untreated, it can be fatal.¹

If you've been diagnosed with hypertension, there are ways to keep it under control. It's important that you monitor your blood pressure regularly so you can note patterns and detect changes before they become too serious.

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mmHg (Upper Number)	And/Or	Diastolic mmHg (Lower Number)
Normal	Less Than 120	And	Less Than 80
Elevated	120-129	And	Less Than 80
Hypertension Stage 1	130-139	Or	80-89
Hypertension Stage 2	140 or Higher	Or	90 or Higher
Hypertensive Crisis Consult Your Doctor Immediately	180 or Higher	And/Or	120 or Higher

What You Can Do To Control Your Blood Pressure²

- **Maintain a healthy weight.** If you are overweight or obese, weight loss may help reduce your blood pressure.
- **Eat a balanced diet.** Try to eat a diet rich in fruit, vegetables, and whole grains. Consider switching to the DASH diet² to help lower your blood pressure.
- **Reduce sodium.** Try to limit your sodium intake to 1,500 mg a day.
- **Get active.** Aim for at least 90 to 150 minutes of aerobic and/or dynamic resistance exercise per week and/or three sessions of isometric resistance exercises per week.
- **Limit alcohol.** Drink no more than one to two drinks a day.
- **Quit smoking.** Smoking increases blood pressure. Stopping smoking helps lower blood pressure and reduces the risk of heart disease.
- **Monitor your blood pressure at home and get regular checkups.** Home monitoring helps you keep track of your blood pressure. Regular visits with a doctor are key to making sure your medications and lifestyle changes are working to manage your blood pressure.

¹heart.org

²nhlbi.nih.gov