High Blood Pressure



Health Bulletin

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Understanding your blood pressure

Blood pressure is measured with two numbers. It is written with one number over the other. You can check your blood pressure at the doctor, at many pharmacies or at home.

115

Systolic

The amount of pressure in your arteries when your heart pumps blood

75

Diastolic

The amount of pressure in your arteries when your heart rests between heartbeats

Below 120	120 to 139	140 or higher
and	or	or
Below 80	80 to 89	90 or higher
Normal for most people	At risk (close to high blood pressure)	High blood pressure

The table above is for people who have **not** been told they have high blood pressure. If you were already told you have hypertension, your provider can help you set a goal that is right for you.

High blood pressure is dangerous



1 in 4 adult New Yorkers have high blood pressure.

Many other New Yorkers have high blood pressure, but don't know it.

- High blood pressure (hypertension) can be overlooked because there are usually no symptoms. But it can cause stroke, heart attack and early death.
- Checking your blood pressure regularly helps you know if there is a problem.
- Groups more likely to have high blood pressure include people aged
 65 and older. Blacks and Latinos.

You can help prevent/control high blood pressure



Whole grains, fruits and vegetables are best. Avoid processed foods.



Read nutrition labels and try to limit your sodium (salt) to 2,300 mg a day.



Limit the amount of alcohol you drink.

Women: No more than 1 drink/day. Men: No more than 2 drinks/day.



Get moving (walking counts!) for at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week.



Quit smoking, since it increases your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Every day is a new opportunity to make a healthy choice. Don't give up! Working toward these goals helps you lead a longer, healthier life.

Sticking with your medications matters

Take your medications, if prescribed. Some people stop taking their high blood pressure medications or skip doses because:



- They don't feel sick.
- They're worried about being able to afford it.
- They're worried about side effects.
- Their blood pressure has started to improve.



Don't skip doses or stop taking your medications. Medications can lower your risk for heart attack and stroke.



Talk to your health care provider and/or pharmacist if you have questions or concerns.



Check your blood pressure regularly. If your blood pressure is under control, your medications are working.

Resources

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