

# KEEP YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE UNDER CONTROL



The term **blood pressure** refers to the force that blood exerts against the walls of the arteries when the heart pumps blood. If this pressure increases, and remains high, it can cause damage to the body.

When you take your blood pressure, two values are produced, one for the systolic pressure (the pressure produced in the arteries when the heart beats) and another for the diastolic pressure (the pressure that is registered when the heart rests in between beats).

When these values are higher than expected, it is considered high blood pressure or hypertension.

The following values can help you know your blood pressure status:

Blood Pressure Category	Blood Pressure Level (mm/HG) Systolic (upper number)	Blood Pressure Level (mm/HG) Diastolic (lower number)
Normal	Less than 120	Less than 80
Elevated	120-129	Less than 80
High Blood Pressure or Hypertension Level 1	130-139	80-89
High Blood Pressure or Hypertension Level 2	140 or higher	90 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis (consult your doctor immediately)	Higher than 180	Higher than 120

## What symptoms are presented when blood pressure is elevated?

Generally, hypertension has no noticeable symptoms, although sometimes it may discomfort that should alert you that something is wrong. Among the most common are:

- Headache
- Numbness on one side of the body
- Ringing in the ears
- Dizziness when getting up or changing position
- Blurred vision

## What are the factors for developing hypertension?

- Family history
- Inadequate nutrition
- Physical inactivity
- Obesity
- Overweight
- Advanced age
- Tobacco use
- Excessive alcohol consumption

## Why is it important to control hypertension?

High blood pressure is a factor that contributes to the development of cardiovascular disease, especially heart disease (heart attack or heart failure). It can also lead to stroke, embolism, or kidney failure.

## What is the treatment for hypertension?

Adopting a healthy lifestyle that can help you control your blood pressure. Your doctor may recommend that you make changes in your daily life. Some of the activities that you can incorporate into your routine are: regular physical activity, not smoking, controlling cholesterol, reducing alcohol consumption, maintaining a healthy weight, and adopting a healthy low-sodium eating plan.

It is often necessary to include drugs in the treatment of hypertension. Talk to your physician to establish a treatment and care plan to control your blood pressure.

## Follow these recommendations in your treatment:

- Take your medications as directed. Do not stop taking them without consulting your physician.
- Keep your physician informed of any changes in your health that may interfere with your treatment.
- Follow your physician's advice.

### REMEMBER:

- Do physical activity
- Maintain a healthy diet
- Consume fruits and vegetables daily
- Lower your salt, sodium, and saturated fat intake
- Monitor blood pressure at home
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Stop smoking
- Visit your physician regularly

# Monitor your blood pressure at home, and share the results with your doctor.

### Reference:

Guideline for the Prevention, Detection, Evaluation, and Management of High Blood Pressure in Adults, Journal of the American College of Cardiology (2017), doi: 10.1016/j.jacc.2017.11.006.

American Heart Association. Blood Pressure Categories. 2021

<https://www.heart.org/-/media/Files/Health-Topics/High-Blood-Pressure/HBP-rainbow-chart-English.pdf>

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