

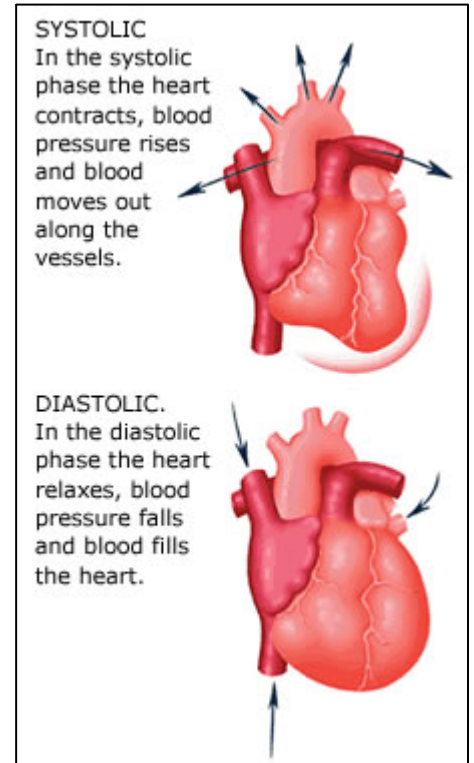
A Guide to High Blood Pressure

Did you know....?

- High Blood Pressure is a serious illness that affects nearly 1 in 3 adults in the United States.
- High Blood Pressure is sometimes called the “silent killer”, because it usually has no noticeable warning signs or symptoms until other serious problems arise; therefore, many people do not know that they have it.
- If left untreated, high blood pressure can cause:
 - Stroke
 - Eye problems
 - Heart attack
 - Kidney problems
 - Death

What is Blood Pressure?

- Blood Pressure is the force of blood pushing against blood vessels.
- Blood Pressure is greatest when your heart beats and is pumping blood. This is systolic blood pressure (top number).
- When your heart rests between beats, your blood pressure falls. This is called diastolic blood pressure (bottom number).
- Your blood pressure goes up and down during the day, depending on what you are doing. Brief rises in blood pressure are normal, but when it consistently stays too high for too long, it is called hypertension.



Guide to Blood Pressure Reading

Blood Pressure Classification	Systolic (mm Hg)		Diastolic (mm Hg)
Normal	<120	AND	<80
Prehypertensive	120-139	OR	80-90
Hypertension	>140	OR	>90

Possible Reasons for High Blood Pressure	Suggestions for Improvement
<p style="text-align: center;">Excess body weight</p>	<p>Being overweight or obese can raise your blood pressure, and losing weight can help you lower your blood pressure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losing as few as 10 pounds can reduce blood pressure in many people. Proper diet and regular exercise can help to maintain a healthy weight.
<p style="text-align: center;">Lack of regular exercise</p>	<p>Physical activity helps lower high blood pressure. Regular exercise can produce a drop of about 10 points in elevated systolic and diastolic levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise at least 30 minutes most days of the week.
<p style="text-align: center;">Smoking</p>	<p>Quitting smoking will lower your blood pressure and decrease your risk of heart attack and stroke!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">High amount of salt in diet</p>	<p>An overall healthy diet can help to maintain healthy blood pressure levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit processed foods in your diet and avoid adding sodium or salt in cooking or at the table. • Spices and herbs are an excellent substitute for salt. • Eat lots of fruits and vegetables.
<p style="text-align: center;">Alcohol Use</p>	<p>In addition to raising blood pressure, too much alcohol can add empty calories to your diet. High levels of alcohol use aggravate hypertension and reduce your heart's pumping ability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men should drink no more than two drinks per day. • Women should have no more than one drink per day. • Pregnant women should not drink alcohol.

***Resources**

- Wellness Councils of America, Blood Pressure & Cholesterol pamphlet
- Food and Drug Administration, Office of Women's Health, High Blood Pressure handout
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, What is High Blood Pressure