



Do You Have High Blood Pressure?

Did You Know?

When you have high blood pressure (also called HBP or hypertension), the increased force of blood flow may put extra strain on your heart and blood vessels. Over time, this extra strain may increase your risk of heart attack, stroke, or other condition.

However, many people who have high blood pressure do not experience any symptoms or even know they have it. The best way to know if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure measured by your doctor or healthcare professional. Understanding your blood pressure numbers is key to controlling high blood pressure.

Do You Have High Blood Pressure? (Please refer to chart.)

Normal Blood Pressure (<120 mm Hg and <80 mm Hg)

Recommendations: Healthy lifestyle choices and yearly checks.

Elevated Blood Pressure (120-129 mm Hg and <80 mm Hg)

Recommendations: Healthy lifestyle changes, reassessed in 3-6 months.

High Blood Pressure / Stage 1 (130-139 mm Hg or 80-89 mm Hg)

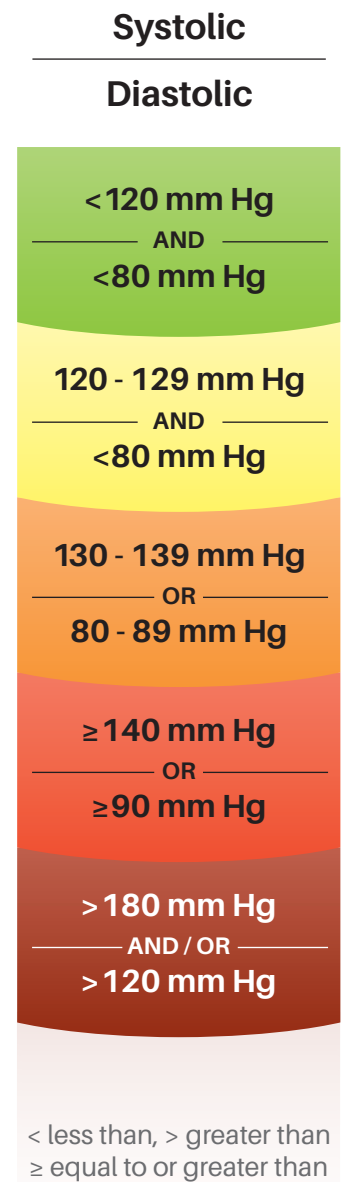
Recommendations: 10-year heart disease and stroke assessment. If less than 10% risk, lifestyle changes, reassessed in 3-6 months. If higher, lifestyle changes and medication with monthly follow-ups until blood pressure is controlled.

High Blood Pressure / Stage 2 (≥ 140 mm Hg or ≥ 90 mm Hg)

Recommendations: Lifestyle changes and 2 different classes of medicine, with monthly follow-ups until blood pressure is controlled.

Hypertensive Crisis (>180 mm Hg and/or ≥ 120 mm Hg)

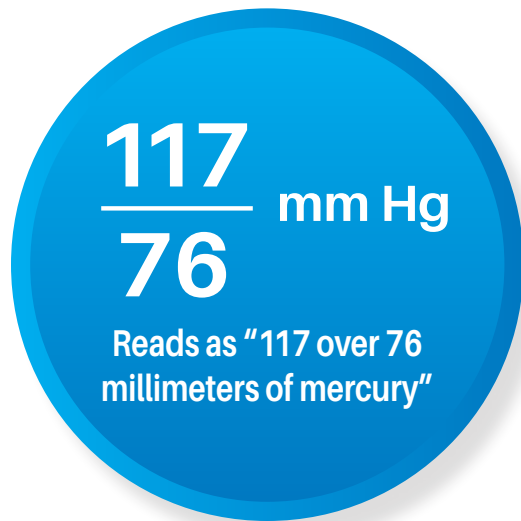
Recommendations: Medical attention is required. If your blood pressure readings suddenly exceed 180/120 mm Hg with no other symptoms, wait 5 minutes and test again. If your readings continue to be unusually high, call your doctor immediately. If you are experiencing chest pain, shortness of breath, numbness/weakness, difficulty speaking, or a change in vision, do not wait to see if your pressure comes down on its own. Call 9-1-1.



Blood Pressure Numbers and What They Mean

Your blood pressure is recorded as two numbers:

- **Systolic blood pressure (the upper number)** — indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls when the heart beats.
- **Diastolic blood pressure (the lower number)** — indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls while the heart is resting between beats.



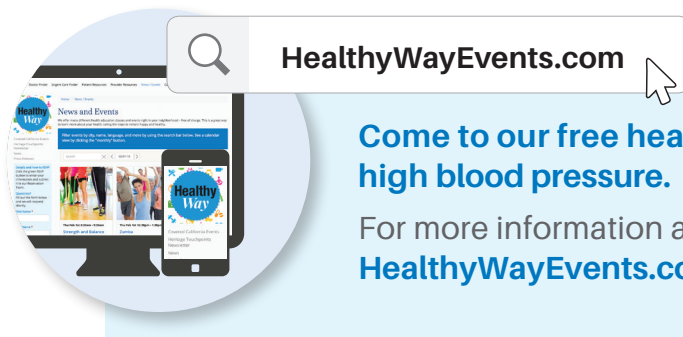
Which Number is More Important?

Typically, more attention is given to systolic blood pressure (the top number) as a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease for people over 50. In most people, systolic blood pressure rises steadily with age due to the increasing stiffness of large arteries, long-term build-up of plaque, and an increased incidence of cardiac and vascular disease.

However, elevated systolic or diastolic blood pressure alone may be used to make a diagnosis of high blood pressure. And, according to recent studies, the risk of death from ischemic heart disease and stroke doubles with every 20 mm Hg systolic or 10 mm Hg diastolic increase among people from age 40 to 89.

Why Blood Pressure is Measured in mm Hg

The abbreviation mm Hg means millimeters of mercury. Why mercury? Mercury was used in the first accurate pressure gauges and is still used as the standard unit of measurement for pressure in medicine.



Come to our free health education classes to learn more about high blood pressure.

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The contents provided are for informational purposes only and not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Please consult with your physician or other qualified health provider prior to changing your diet, starting an exercise regimen, or with any questions that you may have about your health or medical condition.

Individual recommendations need to come from your doctor.

Sources: Adapted from the American Heart Association News (news.heart.org/don't-just-get-your-bp-taken-make-sure-its-taken-right-way). http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HighBloodPressure/KnowYourNumbers/Understanding-Blood-Pressure-Readings_UCM_301764_Article.jsp#.WpnrA7ynHcs