



Neighborhood Health Partners

Managing High Blood Pressure

What Is High Blood Pressure?

High blood pressure (also called hypertension) is a serious condition that may have no symptoms. When your blood pressure is high, damage occurs to your blood vessel walls. This damage can get worse over time and lead to life-threatening problems.

Your blood pressure has two numbers: the top number (systolic) is the pressure inside your arteries when your heart is at work. The bottom number (diastolic) is the pressure inside your arteries when your heart is at rest.

Warning Signs of High Blood Pressure

- Headache
- Blurred vision
- Dizziness or lightheadedness

Diagnosis

Most people find out they have high blood pressure during a routine exam with their doctor. Your blood pressure must be high at least two separate times to confirm that you have hypertension.

Diagnosis

Level	Age/Condition	Top Number	Bottom Number
Normal	Any	119 or below	79 or below
Prehypertension	Any	120 to 139	80 to 89
High	Over age 60	150 or above	90 or above
High	Under age 60	140 or above	90 or above
High	Diabetes or CKD	140 or above	90 or above

Complications

Complications linked to hypertension include the following:

- Coronary artery disease
- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Kidney failure
- Peripheral artery disease
- Eye damage

Tips to Help You Take Control

- Get a home blood pressure meter
- Check your blood pressure regularly at home, and keep a log to review with your doctor at your next visit
- Maintain a healthy weight or lose extra weight (if you are overweight)
- Eat a diet low in fat and rich in fruits, vegetables and fiber
- Reduce the salt in your diet
- Be physically active for at least 20 minutes a day, most days of the week
- Limit alcohol to two drinks a day for men and one drink a day for women
- Avoid tobacco use
- Take medicines as prescribed

If you have a severe headache, vision problems or if your blood pressure is very high, contact your doctor or 911 right away!

Reference Guideline: 2014 Evidence-based Guideline for the Management of High Blood Pressure in Adults: Report from the Panel Members Appointed to the Eighth Joint National Committee (JNC 8). 2013 December.