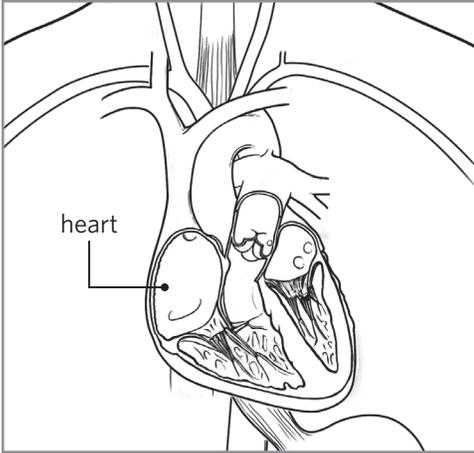


High Blood Pressure



If you have high blood pressure, your heart has to work harder to pump blood. This can increase your risk of heart attack or stroke. But with treatment and lifestyle changes, you can help lower high blood pressure.

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against your artery walls. Your arteries carry blood from your heart to the rest of your body. When your heart beats, blood goes into your arteries. This is when your blood pressure is the highest. In between beats, your blood pressure is lower.

Your blood pressure changes during the day. It's lowest when you sleep, and then rises again when you wake up. It can also go up when you are excited, anxious or active.

You may not know you have high blood pressure because there aren't any symptoms. So, it's important to get your blood pressure checked regularly.

What Your Numbers Mean

Your blood pressure is made up of two numbers:

THE TOP NUMBER is the pressure in your arteries when your heart beats, or pumps blood into your arteries.

THE BOTTOM NUMBER is the pressure in your arteries in between heartbeats.

With your doctor, record your blood pressure below. If you need to lower your blood pressure, set goals with your doctor and record them below.

(systolic)
120
<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
80
(diastolic)

	Systolic Pressure (top number)	Diastolic Pressure (bottom number)
Current	_____	_____
Goal	_____	_____
Normal	less than 120 mm Hg	less than 80 mm Hg
Prehypertension	120-139 mm Hg	80-89 mm Hg
Stage 1-Hypertension	140-159 mm Hg	90-99 mm Hg
Stage 2-Hypertension	160 mm Hg or higher	100 mm Hg or higher

Taking Medicine for High Blood Pressure

There are a lot of different kinds of medicines that can help lower high blood pressure. Your doctor will prescribe what's best for you. It's important to always take your medicine. If you forget sometimes, try to make reminders for yourself, like using a pillbox that has a separate compartment for each day, or posting a note on your refrigerator.

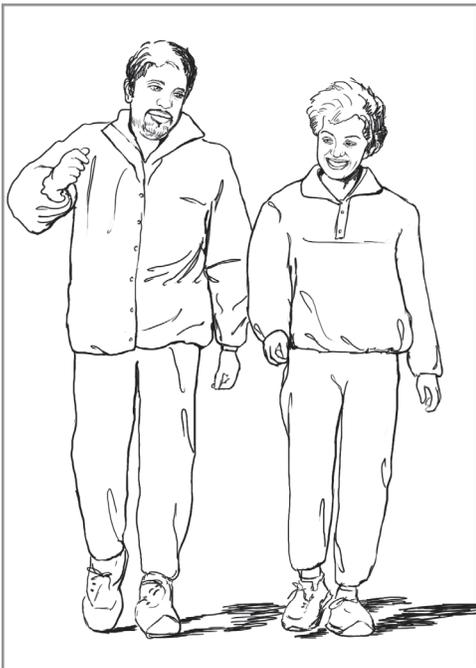
Five Things You Can Do to Help Lower Your Blood Pressure

1. Adjust your diet. Your doctor can help you make a plan. You can also visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov to learn about the DASH diet.

Here are some tips:

- Eat a heart-healthy diet. This means eating foods that are low in calories, fat and cholesterol.
- Cut back on sodium. Don't add salt to your food, eat fewer prepackaged or frozen meals, and look for products that have reduced sodium.
- Read food labels so you know what you're eating.

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- Limit alcohol to one (for women) or two (for men) drinks a day. One drink is equal to 12 oz of beer, 5 oz of wine or 1.5 oz of liquor.
- Make changes gradually. You're more likely to succeed if you make small changes over time.

2. Exercise. Ask your doctor to help you develop an exercise plan. Here are some tips:

- Be active for 30 to 60 minutes most days.
- Start slowly and add minutes to your workout each day. Don't be discouraged if you miss a day, just start again the next day.
- If you've had trouble sticking to an exercise plan in the past, try to choose activities that you enjoy, such as gardening or dancing, and recruit friends or family to join you.
- Fit exercise into everyday activities. Take the stairs instead of the elevator, or ride your bike to work.
- Motivate yourself. Set small goals and record your progress.

3. If you're overweight, talk to your doctor about a weight-loss plan.

Losing just 10 pounds can help reduce blood pressure.

4. Quit smoking. Make a plan with your doctor, and consider joining a support group or visit www.smokefree.gov for tips to help you quit for good.

5. Find ways to manage stress, such as meditating, playing a sport or reading.



To learn more, visit HealthyAdvice.com/BloodPressure101

You can also visit these websites:

- **American Heart Association**
www.americanheart.org
- **The National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute**
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

Remember:

- Get your blood pressure checked regularly.
- Keep scheduled appointments with your doctor.
- Take your medicine as prescribed.
- Monitor your diet, exercise most days, lose weight, quit smoking and manage stress.

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