

HEALTH REALLY MATTERS

High Blood Pressure:

Know the Numbers and Get the Facts

Quick Facts about high blood pressure

- High blood pressure is also called hypertension.
- Your blood pressure is considered high if it consistently measures above 140/90 at the doctor's office or 135/85 on your home monitor.
- When your blood pressure is high it puts stress on the blood vessels in the body.
- This stress can damage the vessels and increase the risk of a heart attack, stroke or damage to kidneys.
- Most people will not feel any signs or symptoms even if their blood pressure is high.
- If you have diabetes or kidney disease it is even more important to manage your blood pressure.

What do the numbers mean?

- Blood pressure is reported as two numbers, systolic and diastolic. Someone with a systolic pressure of 130 and a diastolic pressure of 80 has a blood pressure of 130/80, or 130 over 80.

- The systolic is the pressure when the heart pumps. It is the higher number.
- The diastolic is the pressure when the heart is relaxed between heartbeats.
- It is measured in mmHg or millimeters of mercury, a measurement of pressure.
- Your ideal blood pressure depends on your age and other medical conditions.

If you want to check your blood pressure at home this can

- Help you find out if you have white coat hypertension (when your pressure is always much higher at the doctor's office than at home).
- Let you know if there are certain times of day that your blood pressure is higher.
- Show you if your medications or lifestyle changes are working to control your blood pressure.



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You can help control your blood pressure with these healthy habits

- Keep active by walking, jogging, swimming, or dancing. Every little bit counts!
- Manage your weight: if you are overweight, losing even 10 lbs can improve your blood pressure.
- Quit smoking.
- Focus on nutrition including heart healthy and less salty foods.
- Limit alcohol to one or two drinks per day (maximum 9/week for women and 14/week for men).
- Reduce stress in your life to help your overall health.

Your Pharmacist can

- Help you choose a reliable monitor and review how to best check your blood pressure at home.
- Discuss benefits and possible side effects of the different medicines and work with you and your doctor to help you get the most out of them.
- Support you with lifestyle changes to manage your blood pressure.
- Suggest ways to make it easier to take your medications regularly.

Find more great information and tools here

- Hypertension Canada: <http://goo.gl/XwsjWm>
- How to measure blood pressure: <http://goo.gl/a1V4IK>
- HealthLink BC: <http://goo.gl/v1YZ7S>
- Home Blood Pressure log: <https://goo.gl/ipkSzt>
- Hearth and Stroke Foundation BC: <http://goo.gl/y50MNs>
- Dietitians of Canada: <http://goo.gl/IpyPsP>

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