

hypertension

What Is High Blood Pressure?

A blood pressure of 140/90 mmHg or higher is considered high blood pressure. Both numbers are important. If one or both numbers are usually high, you have high blood pressure.

If you are being treated for high blood pressure and have repeated readings in the normal range, you still have high blood pressure.

There are two levels of high blood pressure: stage 1 and stage 2 (see the chart below).

Categories for Blood Pressure Levels in Adults (in mmHg, millimeters of mercury)*

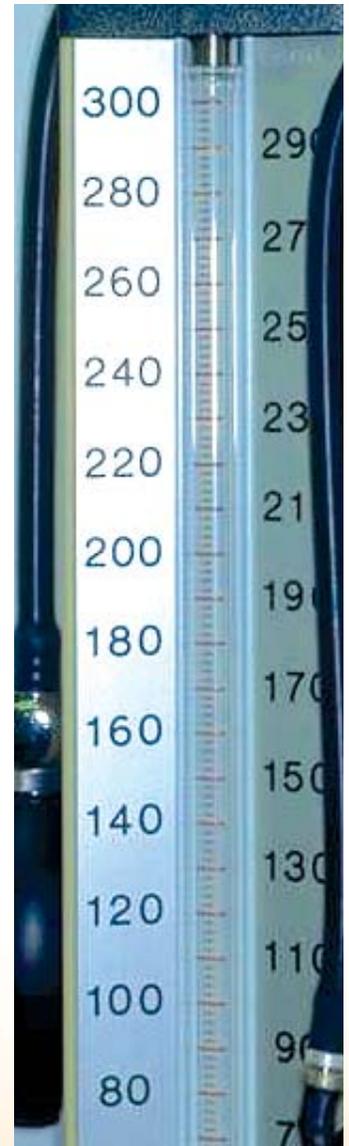
Category	Systolic (top number)	Diastolic (bottom number)
Normal	Less than 120	Less than 80
Prehypertension	120–139	80–89
High blood pressure		
Stage 1	140–159	90–99
Stage 2	160 or higher	100 or higher

*For adults 18 and older who are not on medicine for high blood pressure; are not having a short-term serious illness; and do not have other conditions, such as diabetes and kidney disease.

Note: When systolic and diastolic blood pressures fall into different categories, the higher category should be used to classify blood pressure level. For example, 160/80 mmHg would be stage 2 high blood pressure.

There is an exception to the above definition of high blood pressure. A blood pressure of 130/80 mmHg or higher is considered high blood pressure in people with diabetes and chronic kidney disease.

Source: *National Institutes of Health (NIH).*
Available @ www.nih.gov



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Women and High Blood Pressure

In some women, blood pressure can increase if they use birth control pills, become pregnant, or take hormone therapy (HT) during menopause.



Source: *National Institutes of Health (NIH)*. Available @ www.nih.gov

Use More Spices and Less Salt

An important part of healthy eating is choosing foods that are low in salt (sodium chloride) and other forms of sodium. Using less sodium is key to keeping blood pressure at a healthy level.

Most Americans use more salt and sodium than they need. Some people, such as African Americans and the elderly, are especially sensitive to salt and sodium and should be particularly careful about how much they consume.

Most Americans should consume no more than 2.4 grams (2,400 milligrams) of sodium a day. That equals about 1 teaspoon of table salt a day. For someone with high blood pressure, the doctor may advise less. The 2.4 grams includes *all* salt and sodium consumed, including that used in cooking and at the table.

Before trying salt substitutes, you should check with your doctor, especially if you have high blood pressure. These contain potassium chloride and may be harmful for those with certain medical conditions.

Source: *Your Guide to Lowering Blood Pressure*. Available @ www.nhlbi.nih.gov

Questions To Ask Your Doctor

- What is my blood pressure reading in numbers?
- What is my goal blood pressure?
- Is my blood pressure under adequate control?
- Is my systolic pressure too high (over 140)?
- What would be a healthy weight for me?
- Is there a diet to help me lose weight (if I need to) and lower my blood pressure?
- Is there a recommended healthy eating plan I should follow to help lower my blood pressure (if I don't need to lose weight)?
- Is it safe for me to start doing regular physical activity?
- What is the name of my blood pressure medication? Is that the brand name or the generic name?
- What are the possible side effects of my medication? (Be sure the doctor knows about any allergies you have and any other medications you are taking, including over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and dietary supplements.)
- What time of day should I take my blood pressure medicine?
- Should I take it with food?
- Are there any foods, beverages or dietary supplements I should avoid when taking this medicine?
- What should I do if I forget to take my blood pressure medicine at the recommended time? Should I take it as soon as I remember or should I wait until the next dosage is due?

Source: *National Institutes of Health (NIH)*. Available @ www.nih.gov

Stir-Fried Beef and Potatoes

Trim fat off beef before cooking.

1 1/2 pounds	sirloin steak
2 teaspoons	vegetable oil
1 clove	garlic, minced
1 teaspoon	vinegar
1/8 teaspoon	salt
1/8 teaspoon	pepper
2 large	onions, sliced
1 large	tomato, sliced
3 cups	boiled potatoes, diced



- 1 - Trim fat from steak and cut into small, thin pieces.
- 2 - In a large skillet, heat oil and saute garlic until garlic is golden. Add steak, vinegar, salt, and pepper.
- 3 - Cook for 6 minutes, stirring beef until brown.
- 4 - Add onion and tomato. Cook until onion is transparent. Serve with boiled potatoes or white rice.

Yield: 6 servings—Serving size: 1 1/4 cup

Each serving with potatoes or rice provides:

Calories: 549 • Total fat: 8 g • Saturated fat: 2 g
Cholesterol: 56 mg • Sodium: 288 mg • Calcium: 55 mg
Iron: 5 mg

Source: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/other/syah/index.htm

Add activity to your daily routine and feel more energetic!

Being physically active is important. It can help you feel better and improve your health. There are many fun things that you can do to be active—by yourself or with family or friends. Children and adults should do 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity each day. You can do 30 minutes all at once or 10 minutes at a time, three times a day. If you are not used to being active, start out slowly and work up to 30 minutes a day. Add more activities for longer periods of time as you begin to feel more fit, or add some vigorous activity.

Source: National Institutes of Health (NIH). Available @ www.nih.gov

Hypertension Management – Understanding High Blood Pressure

This newsletter, courtesy of FHCP, is part of an educational series of mailings for **Controlling High Blood Pressure**. Topics discussed concern diet, exercise and medications for high blood pressure.

This program is **free** to all our members. Enrollment forms to join the mailing list are available from your Primary Care Physician's office.

Attention Members:

To have your name removed from our mailing list for the **Controlling High Blood Pressure** newsletter: detach this portion, print your name & sign below.

Mail to: Florida Health Care Plans, 1340 Ridgewood Ave., Rm. 310, Holly Hill, FL 32117.

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Have you created an iHealth Personal Health Record?

The iHealth Record is a no-cost, secure and confidential interactive record that allows you to store, update and share health information with your physician. You can also use this service to communicate with your physician for appointment requests, prescription refills and for general questions, such as: when is my appointment or how much is my copay.

Your iHealth Personal Health record also enables you to access education programs developed by trusted health authorities. These programs are designed to assist you to better understand and manage your health; offering information about diseases and medications to treat certain conditions.

If you haven't already signed up for an iHealth Personal Health Record, go to www.fhcp.medem.com and select New User to register.