

How can I manage or treat HBP?

Talk with your health care provider about the lifestyle changes that are appropriate for you.



Take your medications as prescribed by your provider and **DO NOT** stop without speaking with your provider.



See your provider regularly.



If you smoke, stop smoking.



Eat a diet high in fresh fruits and vegetables, low-fat dairy products, and reduced saturated and total fats.



Read food labels to choose foods that are lower in salt (sodium).



Regular physical activity of at least 120 minutes per week.



Maintain a healthy weight or lose weight if you are overweight or obese.



If you drink alcohol, do so only in moderation: for women, no more than one drink a day; for men, no more than two drinks a day.



Manage stress by practicing healthy coping techniques, such as muscle relaxation, deep breathing, or meditation.

Learn more about HBP at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), American Heart Association (AHA), and the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Watch videos of Veterans speaking on "Journeys with High Blood Pressure" at

https://www.va.gov/HEALTHYQUITY/For_Veterans.
asp or scan the QR code on this brochure.

What are some consequences of HBP?

Peripheral Artery Disease	Narrowing of the arteries to the legs, stomach, arms, and head.
Stroke	Damaged blood vessels can rupture or form clots that travel to the brain stopping blood flow.
Eye Disease	Loss of vision due to damaged blood vessels.
Heart Attack	Damaged arteries in the heart can become clogged.
Congestive Heart Failure	A chronic progressive condition that affects the pumping power of your heart muscles, often referred to simply as "heart failure."
Chronic Kidney Disease	Damage to kidneys that decreases their ability to filter wastes and extra fluid from the blood.

What conditions may increase BP?

- **Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD), which may progress to full kidney failure**
- **Being overweight or obese**
- **Obstructive Sleep Apnea**

For further information, scan a QR code or visit
<https://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/cd/htn/index.asp>

Hypertension
Clinical Practice
Guideline

Hypertension
Patient
Summary

Videos: Veterans
"Journeys with
High Blood
Pressure"



High Blood Pressure

What Does That Mean to Me?



**2020 VA/DoD Clinical Practice
Guideline for Management of
Hypertension**

What is Blood Pressure?

Blood pressure (BP) indicates how hard your heart is working to move blood throughout your body.

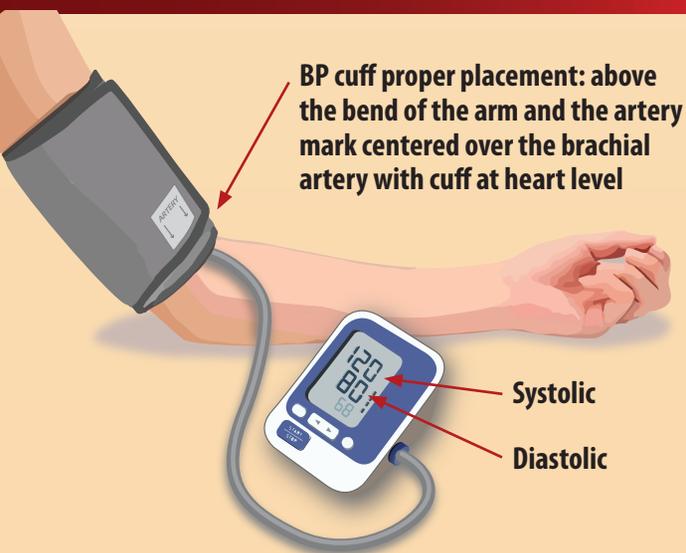
The reading is divided into two numbers. The first number is the systolic (the pressure in your arteries when your heart contracts) and the second number is the diastolic (the pressure in your arteries when your heart relaxes) in millimeters of mercury (mm Hg).

A reading of 120/80 mm Hg is considered normal

What is High Blood Pressure?

High Blood Pressure (HBP) is when the BP is elevated. For most patients with HBP, your provider will recommend treating you to a BP less than 130/90 mm Hg.

To determine your BP goal, have a discussion with your provider who will base the goal on your age, health issues, and preferences. It is important that you discuss what your goal BP is with your provider.



Why is HBP called the “Silent Killer”?

Most of the time there are no obvious symptoms of HBP to indicate there is something wrong. It can silently develop over a long period of time. Some adults do not know they have HBP.

The best way to protect yourself is to visit your primary care provider for checkups and to follow their instructions. It is also important to understand the causes and consequences of HBP so you can slow down or stop the progression. Increased stress and anxiety may temporarily raise your BP by causing your heart to beat faster and your blood vessels to narrow but it doesn't cause chronic HBP.

What may cause HBP?

Poor Diet	Diet high in salt or sodium
Overweight or Obesity	Puts strain on your heart and blood vessels
Aging	Blood vessels tend to become less elastic as we age
Sedentary or Lack of Exercise	The body is made to move to stay healthy
Diabetes	Extra sugar in the blood stream can damage kidneys or make blood vessels less elastic
Other Chronic Conditions	Kidney and hormone problems
Family History	Especially if your parents have HBP
Race	African Americans are more likely to have HBP
Excessive alcohol consumption	

How do I monitor my blood pressure at home?

Sit quietly for 5 minutes

1. Empty bladder
2. Sit with back supported
3. Keep both feet flat on the floor
4. Legs or ankles should not be crossed
5. BP cuff should be placed on bare arm (not over clothes) directly above the bend of the arm and the artery mark centered over the brachial artery
6. Pull BP cuff taut
7. Support the arm with the BP cuff on a flat surface such as a table with cuff at heart level

Take 2 readings at least 1 minute apart in the morning

Do this before taking any antihypertensive medications and also take 2 readings at least 1 minute apart in the evening before going to bed. Some providers recommend only recording the second measurement. Record all BP readings to include date and time unless the readings are automatically sent to your provider.

Two measurements twice daily

The preferred monitoring period is seven days, or a minimum period of three days. Record all BP readings to include the date and time. Ideally you should monitor your BP in the days immediately before the next appointment with provider.

Analyzing readings

For each monitoring period, the average of all readings should be obtained.

For more information see the “Home Blood Pressure Monitoring” video by scanning the QR code or visiting www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/CD/htn



[healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/CD/htn](http://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/CD/htn)