



Strong Hearts maintain “Safe” Blood Pressures

Every time your heart beats it creates tension on the walls of your blood vessels. If this force is too high it can cause damage to the arteries which can lead to heart attack, stroke, kidney or heart failure. Your blood pressure is the systolic pressure over the diastolic pressure and should be less than 120/ less than 80.

The force in the arteries when the heart pumps out the blood is the “top” number or systolic pressure. The force in the arteries as the heart rests is the “bottom” number or diastolic pressure.

B/P Categories

Normal	<120/<80 mmHg
Prehypertension	120-139/80-89 mmHg
Hypertension	≥140/≥90 mmHg
Hypertensive Crisis	>160/>110 mmHg

Check your blood pressure regularly and more frequently if you are running higher than 120/80. Keep track of your B/P for 2 weeks and report the trends to your personal physician. High B/P does not usually cause symptoms so monitor it regularly.

Lifestyle Changes that can Reduce B/P:

1. Weight reduction to a normal weight range for height
2. Restrict sodium intake to < 2,000 mg per day
3. Dietary intake rich in fruit, vegetables, low fat dairy and reduced fat
4. Physical activity at least 30 minutes per day
5. Moderate alcohol use 2 drinks per day for men and 1 drink per day for women
6. Stop using tobacco products

It’s never too late to make healthy lifestyle changes to lower your B/P. Hypertension can be well managed by your physician with medication if necessary.

