

High Blood Pressure/Hypertension

Hypertension, known as high blood pressure, is the abnormally high force of blood pushing against the inside walls of arteries as it travels to all parts of the body.

Risk Factors for Hypertension

- Diet high in salt, fats or both
- Family history of hypertension
- Lack of physical activity
- Obesity or being overweight
- Prolonged stress

Symptoms

Hypertension is:

- Common among adults in the U.S.
- A silent condition - there are usually no symptoms

Treatment

The aim of treatment is to bring blood pressure readings back down into the normal range and keep them there.

Recommended lifestyle changes may include the following:

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat a heart-healthy diet

- Limit alcohol and caffeine
- Stay physically active
- Quit smoking
- Learn ways to manage stress

Many types of medication are available to effectively control hypertension.

Measuring Blood Pressure

Blood pressure:

- Is measured and defined using two numbers: systolic (higher number) and diastolic (lower number)
- Can vary during the day depending on activity level
- Should be in the normal range of 120/80 or less (systolic/diastolic)

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