

BLOOD PRESSURE and HEART DISEASE

WHAT IS BLOOD PRESSURE?

Blood pressure is the force of blood against the walls of your arteries that is needed to move blood through your body.

High blood pressure means your heart has to pump harder than it should to get blood to all parts of your body. High blood pressure raises your chances for having a stroke, heart attack, or kidney problems, or becoming blind.

Blood pressure is recorded as two numbers, for example, 120/80 mmHg (millimeters of mercury). The first number (120) is the systolic pressure of the blood when heart beats. The second number (80) is the diastolic pressure.



WAYS TO CONTROL OR LOWER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

- ♥ Aim for a healthy weight. Losing even 10 pounds can make a difference.
- ♥ Be physically active for at least 30 minutes daily.
- ♥ Limit your salt intake.
- ♥ Quit smoking.
- ♥ Take blood pressure medication if recommended by your doctor.
- ♥ Get your blood pressure checked regularly.
- ♥ Cut back on alcohol: Men should consume no more than two drinks a day; women should have no more than one drink a day.
- ♥ Eat more fruits and vegetables, whole-grain breads and cereals, and fat-free or low-fat milk products.

WHAT YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE NUMBERS MEAN

Level	Systolic Pressure <i>(1st Number)</i>	Diastolic Pressure <i>(2nd Number)</i>	Action
Normal	Below 120 mmHg	Below 80 mmHg	Good for you! Maintain healthy eating and physical activity habits.
Pre-hypertension (At risk for developing high blood pressure)	120-139 mmHg	80-89 mmHg	Keep an eye on your blood pressure. Make healthy changes to your eating and physical activity habits to reduce your risk. Visit the doctor if you have diabetes.
High blood pressure	140 mmHg or greater	90 mmHg or greater	See your doctor right away.



The Sister to Sister Foundation is dedicated to preventing heart disease among women. For more information on how you can make lifestyle changes to lower your risk for heart disease, go to www.sistertosister.org.