



HOW TO MANAGE BLOOD PRESSURE

1 UNDERSTAND READINGS

The first step to managing blood pressure is to understand what the levels mean and what is considered normal, elevated, high blood pressure (hypertension) and hypertensive crisis. heart.org/BPlevels



Blood pressure is typically recorded as two numbers, written as a ratio like this:

117
76

Read as "117 over 76 millimeters of mercury."

Systolic

The top number, the higher of the two numbers, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart beats (when the heart muscle contracts).

Diastolic

The bottom number, the lower of the two numbers, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart is resting between heart beats.

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (top number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (bottom number)
Normal	Lower than 120	and	Lower than 80
Elevated Blood Pressure	120–129	and	80
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1	130–139	or	80–89
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2	140 or higher	or	90 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis (Call your doctor immediately)	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 120

2 TRACK LEVELS



American Heart Association.

Check. Change. Control.®



Check.



Change.



Control.

Health care providers can take blood pressure readings and provide recommendations.

Check. Change. Control. helps you track your progress in reducing blood pressure.

Track online at ccctracker.com/AHA

LEARN MORE AT HEART.ORG/MYLIFECHECK AND HEART.ORG/HBP

3 TIPS FOR SUCCESS



EAT SMART

Eat a healthy diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, lean animal proteins and fish. Limit sodium, saturated fats and added sugars. Limit sugary foods and drinks, fatty or processed meats, salty foods, refined carbohydrates and highly processed foods.

heart.org/EatSmart



MOVE MORE

Physical activity helps control blood pressure, weight and stress levels. heart.org/MoveMore



MANAGE WEIGHT

If you're overweight, even a slight weight loss can reduce high blood pressure. heart.org/Weight



DON'T SMOKE

Every time you smoke, vape or use tobacco, the nicotine can cause a temporary increase in blood pressure. heart.org/Tobacco



SLEEP WELL

Short sleep (less than 6 hours) and poor-quality sleep are associated with high blood pressure.