

# Blood Pressure – Frequently Asked Questions

## What is blood pressure?

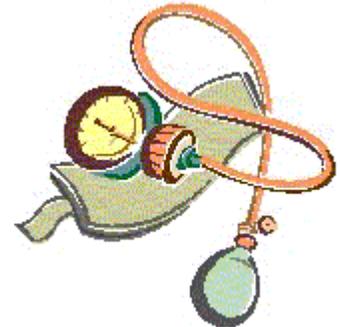
Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of the arteries. The pressure is highest when the heart muscle beats. It is lowest between beats, when the heart muscle relaxes. Blood pressure is always measured with two numbers, like “120 over 80.”

## What is a good blood pressure?

Desirable blood pressure	Pre-hypertension	High blood pressure or hypertension
<u>120</u> or <b>LOWER</b> 80	<u>120-139</u> 80-89	<u>140</u> or <b>HIGHER</b> 90

## How do I know if I have high blood pressure?

High blood pressure often has no symptoms or warning signs. Because of this, it is referred to as the “silent killer.” The only way to find out if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure checked. Your provider can easily tell if your blood pressure is high.



## Am I risk for high blood pressure?

Several factors can increase your risk of developing high blood pressure. These include being overweight, having a family history of high blood pressure, or having pre-hypertension. Your risk of high blood pressure is greater if you are African American.

## I have high blood pressure: what can I do?

You can make healthy lifestyle changes to help lower your blood pressure. Maintaining a healthy weight, not smoking, and being physically active are good for your blood pressure. If you are overweight, a weight loss of as little as 10 pounds can reduce blood pressure. Eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products also helps. Even though medications can lower blood pressure, making lifestyle changes will help those medications work more effectively.