



## New Blood Pressure Guidelines

In November 2017, the American Heart Association released its revised guidelines for the management of blood pressure. These guidelines are the first comprehensive revision since 2003 and lower the definition of hypertension from BP > 140/90 to > 130/80. This new definition will result in nearly half of the US adult population (46%) having high blood pressure, with the greatest impact expected among younger people.

So chances are if you are reading this article, you have a strong likelihood of having elevated blood pressure (BP) or Stage 1 Hypertension. How to know for sure? Start checking your blood pressure at home, keep a log, and share that information with your provider. Many of the newer automatic cuffs have memory built in and most are very easy to use. If you do check your BP at home, bring your cuff and your log to your next appointment so that your provider can check its accuracy and have a better understanding of your range of BPs at home, since some patients' BP is elevated only in the doctor's office (i.e. "white coat hypertension").

If you do have elevated BP or hypertension, consider these lifestyle strategies:

- Lose weight if needed and keep a healthy body weight
- Follow the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet, limit salt and eat potassium-rich foods.
- Exercise regularly
- Limit alcohol (no more than one drink per day for women, two drinks per day for men).

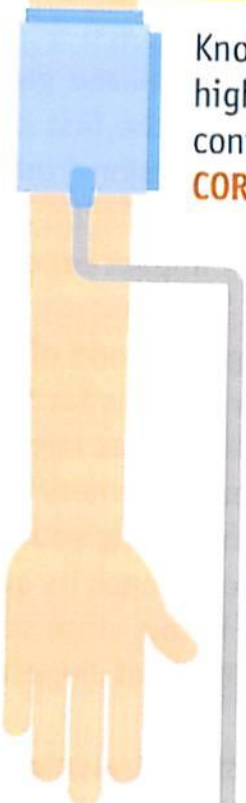
If you are prescribed medication for your blood pressure, it is important to know that the medication does not "cure" the hypertension and must be taken daily as prescribed in order for it to work effectively. Take your medication as prescribed, and do not stop your medication without first discussing it with your provider. Over time, with lifestyle modifications, you may find that your blood pressure requirements decrease and some medication may be reduced or eliminated. But that is a decision that should be made in collaboration with your cardiologist.

The most important aspect of the treatment of hypertension is patient engagement! Stay connected with your cardiologist by enrolling in our Chronic Care Management program and take control of your health and your life!

# HOW TO TAKE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE AT HOME



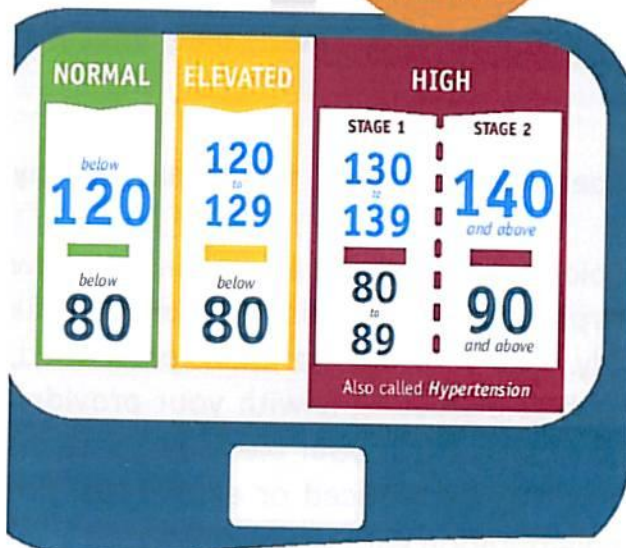
Knowing if you have high blood pressure and controlling it depend on **CORRECT READINGS.**



*Top Number:*  
**SYSTOLIC** (mm Hg)  
The pressure or force in the arteries when the heart beats

*Bottom Number:*  
**DIASTOLIC** (mm Hg)  
The pressure measured between heartbeats

**ATTENTION!**  
Blood pressure readings taken at home may be lower than those taken in an office.



## STEPS TO MAKE SURE BLOOD PRESSURE NUMBERS YOU TAKE AT HOME ARE RIGHT



### SELECT A DEVICE THAT IS ACCURATE

- If you need help, ask your health care professional.
- Bring the monitor to your next health visit to check that the readings match results taken in the office.



### BEFORE YOU TAKE A READING

- Don't smoke, drink caffeinated beverages, or exercise for 30 minutes.
- Rest for at least 5 minutes.



### SIT CORRECTLY

- Sit up straight in a firm chair, with back supported.
- Place feet flat on the floor.
- Rest arm comfortably at heart level on a table.



### PLACE CUFF ABOVE THE BEND IN THE ELBOW

- Make sure the cuff fits properly.



### TAKE AT LEAST 2 READINGS, 1 MINUTE APART

- In the morning before taking your blood pressure medicine (if any) and in the evening before supper.



### RECORD YOUR RESULTS

- Write them down in a journal or use CardioSmart's Blood Pressure Tracker.
- Bring the results to your next health visit.

Information provided for educational purposes only. Please consult your health care provider about your specific health needs.

➔ Go to [CardioSmart.org/HighBP](http://CardioSmart.org/HighBP) to learn more about High Blood Pressure.

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What brand of BP Cuff Do We Recommend?



*Available at most pharmacies, Target, Walmart, Amazon*

Goal BP < 130/80 consistently

Record BP readings

Bring BP cuff and readings to your office visit