

Blood Pressure Campaign

WEEK ONE

Know Your Numbers

Welcome to week one of the Blood Pressure Campaign!

Included in this packet is everything you need for your first week.



BLOOD PRESSURE CAMPAIGN

Week One Overview

Know Your Numbers

Remember to track each completed activity on your campaign tracking sheet!

Watch 'How to Measure Your Blood Pressure at Home'

Watch **How to Measure Your Blood Pressure at Home** from the American Heart Association to learn how to accurately take your blood pressure. You will also learn other facts about what blood pressure is and why it's important.

Watch Now



Read 'New Blood Pressure Changes'

Pages 5-6

Enhance your knowledge about recent changes to blood pressure guidelines from the American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association, and why it matters to you.

Find Your Numbers

Take your blood pressure, either at home or at a local pharmacy. Note your numbers below to reference.

My Blood Pressure:

Reflect on Your Health

Page 7

Journal about your blood pressure. Reflect on if your blood pressure has been consistent or is higher or lower than in the past, and any lifestyle changes that could have caused a shift or maintained this metric.

Read 'Know Your Numbers'

Pages 3-4

Learn the differences between healthy and unhealthy blood pressure readings.

Write an Action Plan

Page 8

Brainstorm how you can work towards and maintain a healthier you!



Know Your Numbers

Blood pressure is a key indicator of health, making this measurement important to understand. Blood pressure is the pressure of blood against the walls of the arterial vessels (blood vessels that carry blood from the heart to other parts of the body). High blood pressure is known as the “silent killer” because it is often present with no warning signs, despite its role in significantly increasing risk for heart disease and stroke. It indicates there is pressure pushing against the walls of the blood vessels, which can lead to internal damage.

High blood pressure can damage organs such as the heart, brain, kidneys, and eyes. It can also damage blood vessels making them less elastic, resulting in restricted blood flow and oxygen to the heart as well as the rest of the body. Although blood pressure fluctuates throughout the day, consistently having high blood pressure poses a substantial risk for health complications such as heart disease, heart attack, and stroke.

Systolic vs. Diastolic Pressure

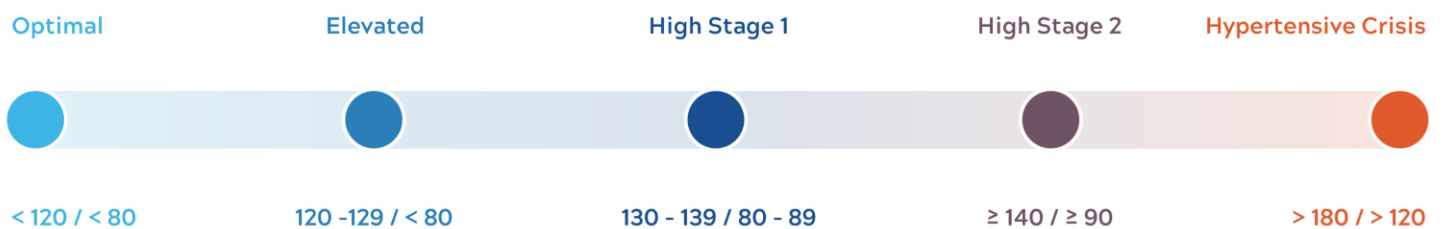
Systolic Pressure

This is the **top number** of a blood pressure reading and it represents the amount of pressure the heart exerts on the arteries when it beats and pushes blood to the body. This is the peak pressure on the blood vessel.

Diastolic Pressure

This is the **bottom number** of a blood pressure reading and represents the amount of pressure in the arteries when the heart rests between beats.

Ranges



What can you do?

The most effective and important way to prevent or manage high blood pressure is to make lifestyle changes that help your body function in a healthy way including exercise, nutrition, stress management, and knowing your risk factors.

Know Your Risk Factors

Non-Modifiable

- > Age
- > Ethnicity
- > Sex
- > Family history

Modifiable

- > Smoking
- > Diet
- > Exercise
- > High cholesterol

Lifestyle Changes

Participate in activities that you enjoy, spend time in nature, practice deep breathing, spend time with family/friends/animals. Incorporate movement and exercise into your routine to help reduce stress. Choose a physical activity that you enjoy and that makes you feel good.

Eat Well

Eat a balanced diet with a variety of foods each week including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy products, poultry, fish, legumes, and nuts/seeds. Listen to your body and pay attention to how foods make you feel. Be mindful of the effect salt has on your body and your blood pressure. Consider reducing dietary sodium which may help lower blood pressure.

Medications

Medications may be needed to control heart disease symptoms, prevent complications, or manage hypertension.

Determine if there are changes you can make soon to help reduce your risk of high blood pressure. Write down one simple step you can take this week to improve your lifestyle habits.



New Blood Pressure Changes

What are the changes?

The American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association recently announced new blood pressure guidelines in (the first update since 2003). These guidelines lower the definition of high blood pressure from **140/90** to **130/80**.

Why does this matter?

These changes matter because it means that there are now approximately 30 million more people with hypertension than before (over 100 million Americans are considered hypertensive vs. just over 70 million previously), and you could be one of them!

How do these changes affect me?

This shift could affect you because you may think your blood pressure is fine when, in reality, it isn't. It is time to recheck your blood pressure to see which category you currently fall under and take action to make your way towards a healthier, happier life.

Why is blood pressure an important issue to address?

According to the Mayo Clinic, "high blood pressure (hypertension) can quietly damage your body for years before symptoms develop. Left uncontrolled, you may wind up with a disability, a poor quality of life or even a fatal heart attack. Roughly half the people with untreated hypertension die of heart disease related to poor blood flow (ischemic heart disease) and another third die of stroke" (2016). This might sound scary, but the good

news is we now have the knowledge to treat and reverse hypertension thanks to modern medicine and many years of research.

What do I do if my blood pressure is "elevated"?

Medications are generally not recommended for those with elevated blood pressure. Instead, there are lifestyle interventions you can incorporate into your daily routine to reverse this hazardous state. These non-drug, evidence-based recommendations include: a diet high in fruits and vegetables (such as the DASH diet), decreased intake of salt and harmful fat (such as saturated- and trans-fat), increased physical activity, weight loss (if overweight or obese), and no more than two alcoholic drinks per day for men, and one for women. Each healthy habit you adopt can bring down your systolic blood pressure (the top number) by 4-5 points.

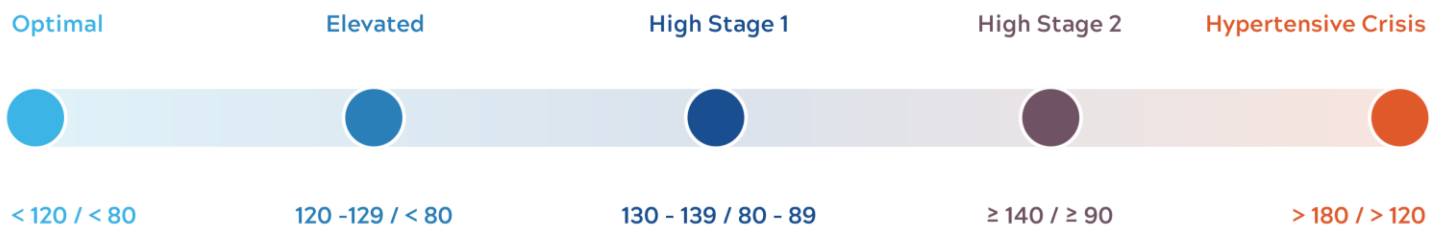


What do I do if I have stage 1 or 2 hypertension?

Those diagnosed with stage 1 hypertension, who do not have cardiovascular disease, are also recommended to make healthy lifestyle changes (as suggested above) unless they have over a 10% risk of developing cardiovascular disease within the next 10 years, in which case, medication along with lifestyle changes may be appropriate. Those diagnosed with stage 2 hypertension or stage 1 hypertension along with cardiovascular disease are recommended to be treated with medication in addition to making healthy lifestyle changes.

What category does your blood pressure fall in?

Ranges



Systolic Pressure

This is the **top number** of a blood pressure reading and it represents the amount of pressure the heart exerts on the arteries when it beats and pushes blood to the body. This is the peak pressure on the blood vessel.

Diastolic Pressure

This is the **bottom number** of a blood pressure reading and represents the amount of pressure in the arteries when the heart rests between beats.

A Note from Our Pharmacist

Elevated blood pressure (BP) is a leading risk factor for cardiovascular disease; therefore, early detection, treatment, and control of BP is a primary target for cardiovascular disease prevention. The intent of the new guidelines is not to increase written prescriptions for anti-hypertensive medications, but rather to encourage earlier detection and prevention - to avoid or delay moving toward pharmaceutical solutions. The new treatment guidelines that are based on risk reduction and treatment approaches vary by specific individual risk factors. The initial evaluation of individuals with high blood pressure should include screening for other cardiovascular risk factors such as smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol/lipid levels, excessive weight, low fitness, unhealthy diet, psychosocial stress and sleep apnea. If your medical provider prescribes pharmacologic therapy, then it is extremely important that you are compliant in terms of taking those medications as prescribed. Luckily, the vast majority of hypertension medications are available as generics and very inexpensive.



BLOOD PRESSURE CAMPAIGN

Write an Action Plan

Brainstorm how you can work towards and maintain a healthier you!

| Objective | Success Criteria | Actions | Implementation |
|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| What do I want to be able to do or to do better? | How will I recognize success? How will I review and measure my improvement? | What methods will I use to achieve my objective? | How will I practice and apply change? |
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