

# High Blood Pressure and Your Health

**NYC**  
**HEALTH+**  
**HOSPITALS**



# What is high blood pressure?

High blood pressure (also called hypertension) is a serious illness. It is often called a “silent killer” because many people have it, but do not know it.



## What are the signs of high blood pressure?

Many people with high blood pressure do not feel sick. There are usually no signs. The only way to know you have hypertension is to get your blood pressure checked by your care team.

## What can high blood pressure do to my body?

High blood pressure can cause life-threatening illnesses, like kidney problems, blindness, a heart attack, or stroke.

## Is there medicine for high blood pressure?

Yes, some people take medicine to help control their blood pressure. Your doctor will tell you if medicine is a part of your treatment plan.

## How can I control my high blood pressure?

Taking small steps to live a healthier life can help you get your blood pressure under control:



**EAT A DIET WITH PLENTY OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**

A white salt packet with a blue dollar sign (\$) is shown inside a large orange circle. A thick, bold red 'X' is superimposed over the entire scene, indicating that consuming salt is discouraged.

**USE LESS SALT AND EAT LESS SALTY FOODS**

An illustration of a blue pill bottle with a white label and a red cap, next to a white blister pack containing several blue and white capsules. The items are set against a light blue circular background.

**IF YOUR DOCTOR GIVES YOU MEDICINE, TAKE IT EVERY DAY**



**DRINK LESS ALCOHOL**



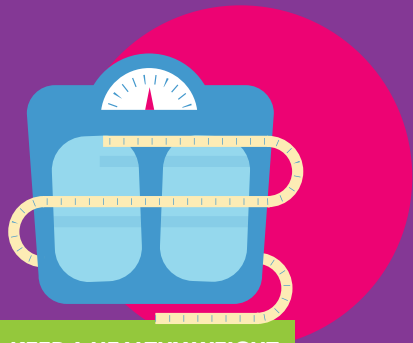
**QUIT SMOKING**



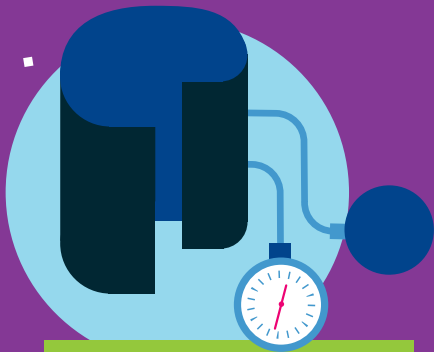
**GET AT LEAST 30 MINUTES OF EXERCISE AT LEAST 5 DAYS A WEEK**



**TALK TO YOUR CARE TEAM ABOUT YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE NUMBERS**



**KEEP A HEALTHY WEIGHT**



**CHECK YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE**

The more healthy steps you take, the better it is for your blood pressure and your health. Talk to your doctor or nurse about other ways you can lower your blood pressure today.

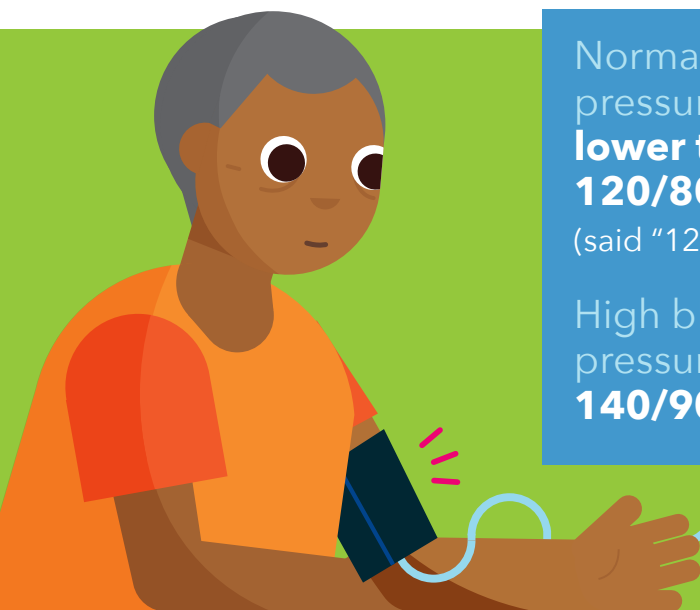
## Am I at risk for high blood pressure?

Anyone can have high blood pressure, but you are more likely to have it if you:

- + Are 55 years of age or older
- + Have a family history of high blood pressure

Your chances of having high blood pressure are also higher if you:

- + Are overweight
- + Eat foods high in salt, like fast food, cold cuts, or pizza
- + Do not get regular exercise
- + Have more than one alcoholic drink per day if you are a woman or more than two drinks per day if you are a man



Normal blood pressure is **lower than 120/80**

(said "120 over 80")

High blood pressure is **140/90 or higher**



## What do the blood pressure numbers mean?

A blood pressure test measures how hard your heart is working to pump blood through your body.

It is measured with two numbers. The first number is your pressure when your heart beats. The second number is your pressure when your heart relaxes.

To find a doctor who can help you with your blood pressure, visit [nychealthandhospitals.org](http://nychealthandhospitals.org)

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