

## The 3 Ms of blood pressure control



### Medication

Most of the time, high blood pressure (hypertension) has no obvious symptoms to indicate that something is wrong. The best way to protect yourself is to take your blood pressure medication as prescribed by your provider.



### Measure

The only way to know if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure measured. Understanding your results is key to controlling high blood pressure. A single measurement does not provide an accurate indication of your blood pressure management.

Follow your care provider's instructions for how often you should record your blood pressure readings at home.



### Modification

Making lifestyle modifications may help lower your blood pressure.



#### Stop Smoking

Smoking can lead to many health issues. Avoid ALL smoking. Talk to your provider about quitting right away.



#### Exercise

Stretching and walking daily is a great way to start!



#### Eat Healthy

Avoid fried and fast foods. Add in fruits and vegetables with all of your meals and snacks. Talk with your provider about limiting your salt intake (the DASH diet).



#### Lose Weight

Discuss your weight with your doctor and identify your weight goals.

## Understanding your blood pressure reading

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

**117** Systolic  


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**76** Diastolic

### Systolic

The top number, which is also 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, which is lower of the two numbers, measures the pressure in the arteries between heart beats (when the heart muscle is resting between beats and refilling with blood).

This blood pressure chart reflects categories defined by the American Heart Association (AHA) recommendations for healthy blood pressure.

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mm Hg (top #)		Diastolic mm Hg (bottom #)
Normal	less than 120	and	less than 80
Elevated	120-129	and	less than 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 (consult your provider immediately)	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 120

Source: American Heart Association