



MEASURING BLOOD PRESSURE

Your blood pressure should be taken each time you visit the doctor's office under normal circumstances. If you have a self-monitoring blood pressure device or you use the self-serve blood pressure monitoring device at your local PROfile Pharmacy, you should be aware of the following:

- You should not measure your blood pressure until you have had a chance to relax for at least five minutes
- You should not take your blood pressure when you are excited, angry or emotionally upset
- It is best not to take blood pressure within two hours of eating a large meal, consuming caffeine, smoking, or participating in physical activity
- Blood pressure is best monitored on the arm that typically gives the higher reading for you
- You should always use the correct size of blood pressure cuff for the size of your arm
- Be sure to record your blood pressure reading, as well as the time of day and any activities that might have influenced the particular reading

Talk with your PROfile Pharmacist if you have any questions or concerns about your blood pressure or monitoring.

WHEN SHOULD I SEE A DOCTOR?

You should see a doctor immediately under the following circumstances:

- Your blood pressure reading is above 180/110 (i.e. "180 over 110")
- Your blood pressure rises suddenly
- You have a sudden, severe headache that is worse than any headache that you have ever had before



WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada
 222 Queen St., Suite 1402
 Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5V9
 Phone: 613-569-4361
Check your local phone listings for the regional office nearest you or visit their website.
ww2.heartandstroke.ca

www.sodium101.ca

Blood Pressure Canada
www.hypertension.ca/bpc/

Canadian Health Network
www.canadianhealthnetwork.org

DASH Diet
www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/prevent/h_eating/h_eating.htm

Canada's Physical Activity Guide
www.paguide.com

Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_eng.php

The information found in this PROfile health brochure is of a general nature only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your pharmacist, physician, or other healthcare provider. If you have questions relating to your specific health concerns, please contact your personal healthcare provider.



High Blood Pressure



Your PROfile Pharmacist
 has many resources available to help you manage your high blood pressure and is always pleased to discuss your health concerns!

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WHAT IS BLOOD PRESSURE AND WHO IS AT RISK?

Blood pressure is a term used to describe the force placed on the walls of the arteries (blood vessels) by blood as it flows through the body. This force is affected by hormones that are released in the body, the flexibility of the arteries, and the effort made by the heart to push blood through the body.

The following factors increase the risk for having high blood pressure:

- Being overweight
- Having a family history of high blood pressure
- Being of African-American descent
- Having an inactive lifestyle
- Drinking too much alcohol
- Having too much salt or not enough potassium, calcium, or magnesium in the diet
- Using certain medications such as birth control pills, steroids, decongestants, and anti-inflammatory medications

Blood pressure is recorded using two numbers. The higher number, known as the 'systolic' blood pressure, indicates the pressure exerted against the walls of the arteries during a beat of the heart. The lower number, known as the 'diastolic' blood pressure, indicates the pressure exerted against the walls of the arteries between heartbeats (when the heart is resting).

A blood pressure of 120/80 (i.e. "120 over 80") means that the systolic pressure is 120 and the diastolic pressure is 80. High blood pressure for most people is said to occur when the readings are consistently higher than 140/90. People with certain diseases (e.g. diabetes) will need to keep their blood pressure at a lower 'target' in order to prevent complications of high blood pressure. Remember, having one blood pressure reading that is high does not mean you have high blood pressure!

WHY IS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE UNHEALTHY?

Consistently high blood pressure increases the risk for heart attack, stroke, kidney damage and eye damage. High blood pressure has been called the 'silent killer' because it doesn't make you feel any different than normal. That is why it is so important to have regular blood pressure checks.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?

The best way to reduce your risk of getting high blood pressure is to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

- If you are overweight, losing just 4.5 kg (10 lbs) can lower your blood pressure
- A brisk walk 3 to 5 times a week will help lower your blood pressure and may help you to lose weight
- Alcohol should be consumed only in moderation
- Salt should be used in moderation, also be sure to eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, legumes, and low-fat dairy products in order to receive adequate intake of potassium, calcium and magnesium
- Start the process of quitting smoking at once – smoking significantly increases your risk for heart attack and stroke

BLOOD PRESSURE CLASSIFICATIONS (FOR PEOPLE WITH NO OTHER DISEASE RISK FACTORS):

	Systolic	and	Diastolic
Ideal	less than 120	and	less than 80
Normal	less than 130	and	less than 85
High-Normal	130–139	and	85–89

Readings consistently above 140 systolic or 90 diastolic may be diagnostic of high blood pressure. Be sure to call your doctor if you fall into this category.



Many different types of medications are used to lower blood pressure. Medications that work in different ways are often used together to lower blood pressure to the values that are most healthy for you. Following is a brief description of how the most popular classes of medications used for the treatment of blood pressure work:

Diuretics "water pills" - (e.g. furosemide, hydrochlorothiazide) help to decrease the volume of fluid in your arteries. This reduces the pressure on the artery walls.

Beta-blockers - (e.g. acebutolol, atenolol, metoprolol) block the effects of hormones in the body (e.g. norepinephrine) that increase blood pressure.

ACE Inhibitors/ARBs - (e.g. ramipril, lisinopril, quinapril, enalapril/candesartan, irbesartan, losartan, valsartan), block the hormone angiotensin II, relaxing the blood vessels and lowering blood pressure.

Calcium Channel Blockers - These medications (e.g. amlodipine, nifedipine, verapamil) prevent the movement of calcium into the walls of the blood vessels. This allows the blood vessels to dilate and reduces blood pressure.

It is very important to take blood pressure medications as prescribed by your doctor and to check your blood pressure on a regular basis. Many people need to take more than one blood pressure medication in order to keep their blood pressure under control.

Studies have shown that many people stop taking their blood pressure medication because they 'don't feel any different'. These people put themselves at increased risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney and eye disease.