

Tips for Checking Blood Pressure at Home

These tips will make your blood pressure reading more accurate and help ensure the right treatment.

- Rest 5 minutes before taking your blood pressure.
- Don't smoke or drink caffeine for at least 30 minutes before.
- Take your blood pressure before (not after) you eat.



- Sit comfortably with your back supported and both feet on the floor (don't cross your legs).
- Elevate your arm to heart level on a table or a desk.
- Take 2 measurements in the morning and 2 measurements in the afternoon/evening, at least 12 hours apart.
- Write down your readings in a notebook. Take that notebook and your blood pressure medications to every medical visit.
- Talk to your doctor for more information about home blood pressure monitoring.

Know Your Numbers

Taking and tracking your blood pressure at home can help you control it.

My Numbers

_____/_____
(Systolic/Diastolic)

Questions to Ask Your Doctor

Developed by the Texas Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke Partnership and the Texas Heart Disease and Stroke Program

dshs.texas.gov/heart

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE



TEXAS
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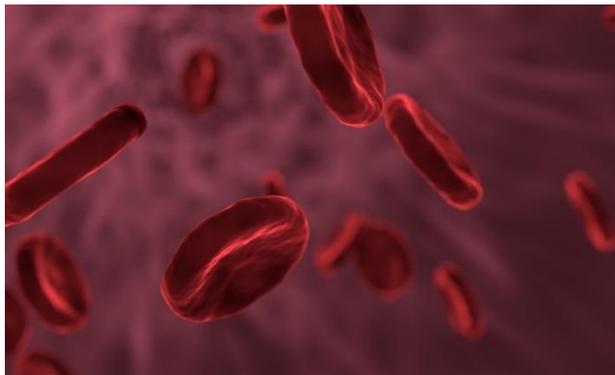
Texas Department of State
Health Services

Learn About High Blood Pressure and How to Control It

What is High Blood Pressure?

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of the arteries that carry blood from your heart to other parts of your body. The pressure normally rises and falls throughout the day, but it can damage your heart and cause health problems if it stays high for a long time. High blood pressure is also called hypertension.

High blood pressure increases your risk for heart disease and stroke, which are leading causes of death.



Blood pressure is measured using two numbers. The first number, called systolic blood pressure, represents the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart beats. The second number, called diastolic blood pressure, represents the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart rests between beats.

120 ← **Systolic**
80 ← **Diastolic**

What Do My Blood Pressure Numbers Mean?

High blood pressure usually has no warning signs or symptoms, so many people don't realize they have it. There's only one way to know whether you have high blood pressure: Have a doctor or other health professional measure it.

Normal	120/80 or below
Elevated	between 120-129/80
High Blood Pressure	130-139/80-89 or higher

Source: American Heart Association

If you are having any of the following symptoms and your blood pressure is 180/120 or higher, call 9-1-1:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Back pain
- Numbness/weakness
- Change in vision
- Difficulty speaking
- Severe headache
- Nosebleed
- Severe anxiety

Ways to Lower High Blood Pressure

- Follow a healthy diet
 - Eat more fruits and vegetables
 - Avoid saturated fats
 - Lower your sodium intake
- Take medications
 - As your doctor or pharmacist says
 - Ask your doctor or pharmacist about steps you can take to manage your blood pressure
- Stay physically active
 - Take walk breaks throughout the day
 - Do something you enjoy like bicycling, Zumba or gardening



- Drink less alcohol
 - Excessive alcohol use puts health at risk
- Don't smoke
 - Visit [yesquit.org](https://www.yesquit.org) for tools to help you quit
- Lower your stress level
 - Taking steps to lower your stress can help improve your health, including your blood pressure