

High blood pressure, or hypertension

High blood pressure, also called hypertension, is very common. Almost half of all Americans have it.¹ Often there are no symptoms, so you may have high blood pressure and not know it.

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the pressure of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. When the pressure in your vessels stays high too long, your doctor might say you have hypertension. Over time, hypertension can lead to heart disease, kidney disease, stroke, and even death.

How does blood pressure get high?

The exact causes of high blood pressure are not known. As we approach middle age, high blood pressure becomes more common.² Lifestyle factors, eating habits, and family medical history can play a part in your risk for developing high blood pressure.³

Well visits a great time to get tested

Getting your blood pressure measured is the only way to find out if it is high. Your doctor usually will test your blood pressure during a well visit.

[Learn more about well visits for adults →](#)

Systolic and diastolic pressure

When your doctor talks to you about your blood pressure, they will tell you it's one number over another number. Those two numbers are your systolic pressure and diastolic pressure.

The systolic is the pressure on your blood vessels when your heart pumps out blood.

The diastolic is the pressure between beats, when the heart rests. Blood fills the heart and pressure in the vessels drops.

By the numbers

- “Normal” blood pressure is 120/80 or under
- Stage 1 hypertension is blood pressure at or above 130/80
- Stage 2 is blood pressure at or above 140/90⁴

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Risk factors

Several factors can contribute to high blood pressure.

Risk factors you can control:

- Your diet and/or your weight
- How much you exercise
- How much you drink alcohol and/or smoke

Risk factors you cannot control:

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Family history
- Genetics
- Race

Having diabetes can also raise your risk for developing hypertension.

Learn how to manage diabetes →

If you think you have some of these risk factors, talk to your doctor about your blood pressure.

In some cases, making some lifestyle changes is enough. Your doctor may suggest you take medicine to control your blood pressure. Talk to your doctor about how to control high blood pressure.⁵

Having your blood pressure under control will help you have more healthy days and avoid other health issues.

Sources

1. "Facts About Hypertension," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accessed October 24, 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/facts.htm>.
2. "High blood pressure: Why me?" Harvard Medical School. Accessed October 24, 2022, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/high-blood-pressure-why-me-201605029288>.
3. "High blood pressure: Why me?" Harvard Medical School. Accessed October 24, 2022, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/high-blood-pressure-why-me-201605029288>.
4. "Facts About Hypertension," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/facts.htm>. Accessed October 24, 2022.
5. "Know Your Risk for High Blood Pressure," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accessed October 24, 2022, https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/risk_factors.htm.

Call If You Need Us

If you have questions or need help reading or understanding this document, call us at **800-480-1825 (TTY: 711)**. We are available Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Eastern time. We can help you at no cost to you. We can explain the document in English or in your first language. We can also help you if you need help seeing or hearing. Please refer to your Member Handbook regarding your rights.

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- You can also file a civil rights complaint with the
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights
electronically through their Complaint Portal, available at
<https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or at **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201, **800-368-1019**, **800-537-7697 (TDD)**. Complaint forms are available at <https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

Auxiliary aids and services, free of charge, are available to you. **800-480-1825 (TTY: 711)**

Humana provides free auxiliary aids and services, such as qualified sign language interpreters, video remote interpretation, and written information in other formats to people with disabilities when such auxiliary aids and services are necessary to ensure an equal opportunity to participate.

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Language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you.
800-480-1825 (TTY: 711)

English: Call the number above to receive free language assistance services.

Español (Spanish): Llame al número que se indica arriba para recibir servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.

繁體中文 (Chinese): 您可以撥打上面的電話號碼以獲得免費的語言協助服務。

Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese): Gọi số điện thoại ở trên để nhận các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí.

한국어 (Korean): 무료 언어 지원 서비스를 받으려면 위 번호로 전화하십시오.

Tagalog (Tagalog – Filipino): Tawagan ang numero sa itaas para makatanggap ng mga libreng serbisyo sa tulong sa wika.

Русский (Russian): Позвоните по вышеуказанному номеру, чтобы получить бесплатную языковую поддержку.

Kreyòl Ayisyen (French Creole): Rele nimewo ki endike anwo a pou resevwa sèvis éd gratis nan lang.

Français (French): Appelez le numéro ci-dessus pour recevoir des services gratuits d'assistance linguistique.

Polski (Polish): Aby skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej, należy zadzwonić pod wyżej podany numer.

Português (Portuguese): Ligue para o número acima para receber serviços gratuitos de assistência no idioma.

Italiano (Italian): Chiamare il numero sopra indicato per ricevere servizi di assistenza linguistica gratuiti.

Deutsch (German): Wählen Sie die oben angegebene Nummer, um kostenlose sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zu erhalten.

日本語 (Japanese): 無料の言語支援サービスを受けるには、上記の番号までお電話ください。

Diné Bizaad (Navajo): Wóda hí béesh bee hani'í bee wolta'ígíí bich'í' hódíílnih éí bee t'áá jik'eh saad bee áká'ánída'áwo'déé níká'adoowot.

العربية (Arabic): اتصل برقم الهاتف أعلاه للحصول على خدمات المساعدة اللغوية المجانية.