

## WHAT IS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?

High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, means high pressure (or tension) in the arteries. Arteries are vessels that carry blood from the heart to all the tissues and organs of your body. Blood pressure is a measure of how hard the blood pushes against the walls of your arteries as it moves through your body. It is normal for blood pressure to go up and down through the day, but if it stays up, you have high blood pressure.

People with high blood pressure often experience no symptoms unless their blood pressure is extremely high or they have had high blood pressure for a long time. When blood pressure is high, it starts to damage the blood vessels, heart and kidneys. It's important to remember that if left untreated, high blood pressure may lead to serious health complications including heart attack, stroke, and kidney failure.

## WHAT SHOULD MY BLOOD PRESSURE BE?

Blood pressure measurement is listed with two numbers:

- ✚ Systolic pressure (the top number) – measures the pressure when the heart is pumping blood to the body through the arteries.
- ✚ Diastolic pressure (the bottom number) – measures the pressure within the arteries when the heart is receiving blood returning from the body.

Classification	Systolic Pressure (top number)	Diastolic Pressure (bottom number)
<b>Normal</b>	Less than 120	Less than 80
<b>Pre-hypertension</b>	120-139	80-89
<b>Hypertension</b>	140 and over	90 and over

Adults should have a blood pressure of less than 120/80. High blood pressure is 140/90 or higher. Many people fall into the category in between, called pre-hypertension. People with pre-hypertension need to make lifestyle changes to bring their blood pressure down and help prevent or delay high blood pressure.

## KEYS TO CONTROLLING BLOOD PRESSURE

- ✓ **Stay at a healthy weight** – lose weight if you are overweight. Excess weight adds to strain on the heart.
- ✓ **Eat less salt and salty foods** – much of the sodium we eat comes from salt we add to our food either cooking or at the table, or that companies add to prepared foods. Read the labels when shopping and avoid pre-packaged food with high sodium (salt) content.
- ✓ **Exercise regularly** – if possible, exercise for 30 minutes on most days. Take a brisk walk.
- ✓ **Live a healthy lifestyle** – avoid smoking, drink alcohol moderately.
- ✓ **Avoid Stress** – try to avoid things that cause stress for you.
- ✓ **Take your medication** – take the medicines your doctor prescribed.

The goal of treatment is to reduce blood pressure so that you have a lower risk of complications. You and your healthcare provider should set a blood pressure goal for you. You should know that making healthy lifestyle choices is recommended because it will help improve your overall health. Follow your treatment plan, including exercise and diet, and take your medication as directed. Your doctor customizes your treatment plan with your age, body, health and lifestyle in mind.

## WHO IS RX OUTREACH?

Rx Outreach is a non-profit organization that provides affordable medications to people in need. Through the Rx Outreach Program, low-income, uninsured patients have access to over 400 prescription medication strengths through our mail order pharmacy. Rx Outreach serves individuals and families whose income is 300% or less of the federal poverty level. Each year we serve over 60,000 people across all fifty states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Annually we dispense over 1.2 million months of medication.

**BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICATIONS AVAILABLE ON RX OUTREACH**  
 Amlodipine/Atenolol/Benazepril/Furosemide/Losartan  
 Lisinopril/Metoprolol/Quinapril/Ramipril/Verapamil  
 ...and many others