

# Hypertension: Prevention and Management

## Understanding Hypertension

Hypertension, commonly known as high blood pressure, is a chronic medical condition where blood pressure in the arteries is persistently elevated. It is often called the "silent killer" because it typically has no symptoms but can lead to serious health complications.

## Blood Pressure Classifications

Normal: Less than 120/80 mmHg Elevated: Systolic 120-129 and diastolic less than 80 Stage 1 Hypertension: Systolic 130-139 or diastolic 80-89 Stage 2 Hypertension: Systolic 140 or higher or diastolic 90 or higher Hypertensive Crisis: Systolic higher than 180 and/or diastolic higher than 120

## Risk Factors

Non-modifiable risk factors include age, family history, race, and gender. Modifiable risk factors include obesity, physical inactivity, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, high sodium intake, stress, and certain chronic conditions like diabetes.

## Treatment Approaches

Lifestyle Modifications: Weight management, regular physical activity, dietary changes (DASH diet), sodium reduction, limited alcohol consumption, and stress management. Medications: ACE inhibitors, ARBs, calcium channel blockers, diuretics, and beta-blockers are commonly prescribed. The choice depends on individual patient factors and comorbidities.

## Monitoring and Prevention

Regular blood pressure monitoring at home and during healthcare visits is essential. Prevention strategies include maintaining healthy weight, regular exercise, balanced diet, limiting sodium and alcohol, not smoking, and managing stress effectively. Complications of untreated hypertension include heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, and vision problems.