

Understanding Your Blood Pressure Numbers

Are you concerned about your blood pressure? If so, you can easily start monitoring it in your own time in your own home. You still want to have it checked regularly by your doctor. The best way to monitor your blood pressure is by understanding the numbers first.

There is a top and bottom number for your blood pressure reading. The top number is your systolic pressure. Systolic pressure is the force of blood in your arteries as your heart is beating.

The bottom number is your diastolic pressure. Diastolic pressure is the force of blood in your arteries as your heart relaxes between each beat.

There are four different categories your blood pressure reading can fall under. The first is a normal blood pressure reading. Normal blood pressure is when your systolic pressure is below 120 and your diastolic pressure is below 80. This would read 120/80. You can keep this blood pressure number by maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

The second category is 'prehypertension.' This is where your systolic pressure reads 120-139. Your diastolic pressure would be between 80 and 89. This would read as 121/81 or 139/89. If you have prehypertension just maintain a healthy lifestyle to keep your blood pressure from increasing.

The third category is called Stage 1 hypertension. This is where your systolic pressure is between 140 and 159 and your diastolic pressure is between 90 and 99. If you have a reading like this try to adopt a healthier lifestyle. If you cannot lower your blood pressure on your own talk with your doctor about medication.

The fourth category is called Stage 2 hypertension. This is where your systolic pressure is 160 or higher and your diastolic pressure is 100 or higher. If you have this high of blood pressure consider adapting a healthier lifestyle and talk with your doctor about taking medication to help lower it.

While you can easily watch your diet and weight and get plenty of exercise to help maintain or lower your blood pressure, that may not be enough. Blood pressure medication might be prescribed by your doctor and you might even have to take two.

If this happens be sure you tell your doctor of any other medication you might be taking. Some medications including antidepressants, cold medicines, nasal

decongestants and even oral contraceptives can raise your blood pressure.

Like usual, talk with your doctor about any concerns you might have and if you have any questions about your blood pressure. There are many available ways to treat high blood pressure and you want to be sure to find the right option best suited for you.

By taking control of your blood pressure you can take control of your health and have a longer healthier life. If you smoke, try to quit, try to limit your alcohol consumption and eat lots of fruit and vegetables.

If you have a dog, take a walk with them everyday. Get yourself at least thirty minutes of physical activity. You will be thankful you did when you realize how much better you feel.