

Hypertension Basics

What is hypertension?

Hypertension is a dangerous condition where blood pressure is persistently higher than normal.



What causes blood pressure to be high?

High blood pressure is mainly due to clogs or blockages in arteries so that the heart has to pump harder to get blood flowing throughout the body. This causes damage in the walls of the arteries over time and ultimately can damage the heart.

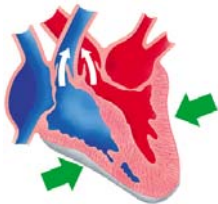
What are the possible complications associated with hypertension?

Having high blood pressure over time puts stress on the heart and arteries and can lead to:

- Stroke
- Heart disease
- Dementia
- Kidney failure
- Impotence
- Vision loss

What do the blood pressure numbers mean?

Systolic **120/80** Diastolic



Systolic (top number)
The pressure exerted on the arteries when the heart beats/pumps

Diastolic (bottom number)
The pressure exerted in between beats when the heart is at rest.



Diagnostic levels

Normal: less than 120/80
Pre-hypertension: 120-139/ 80-89
Stage 1 Hypertension: 140-159/ 90-99
Stage 2 Hypertension: More than 160/100

One reading can not diagnose Hypertension.

It takes 2 or more readings by your doctor or other health professional, taken at least 2 minutes apart, for 2 or more visits before a diagnosis of hypertension can be confirmed.