

## BLOOD PRESSURE: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

**120**  
**80**

### Systolic Blood Pressure

The 1st (top) number indicates how much pressure your blood is pushing against your artery walls when the heart beats.

**120**  
**80**

### Diastolic Blood Pressure

The 2nd (bottom) number indicates how much pressure your blood is pushing against your artery walls while the heart is resting between beats

### Which number is more important?

**BOTH-** and either number can be used to diagnose high blood pressure. Typically, more attention is given to the top number; as it is a bigger risk factor for heart disease for those over the age of 50.

## BLOOD PRESSURE READINGS

### Normal:

120/80 or Below

### At Risk (Pre-Hypertension):

120/80 to 139/89

### High Blood Pressure (Hypertension):

140/90 or Higher

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- ✓ Know your numbers- Ask your doctor what your target BP should be and make a plan to get there!
- ✓ Check your Blood Pressure at home
- ✓ Take your medication!

## RISK FACTORS RELATED TO BLOOD PRESSURE

- 1 **Family History**
- 2 **Age: Higher Age = Higher Risk**
- 3 **Gender: More common in men**
- 4 **Race: Noted increase in African Americans**
- 5 **History of chronic kidney disease**
- 6 **Being overweight / Not physically active**
- 7 **Too much salt / Too little potassium in diet**
- 8 **Too much alcohol**

**Signs and Symptoms of High Blood Pressure:**  
*There usually are NONE!*

High Blood Pressure can affect your health and quality of life. It can cause the following:

- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Heart failure
- Kidney disease/ failure
- Vision Loss
- Peripheral artery disease
- Vascular Dementia

### Make Lifestyle Changes to Reduce Your Risk of High Blood Pressure

- Eat a well-balanced diet, low in sodium
- Limit alcohol
- Enjoy regular activity  
*(Your Therapy Team Can Help!)*
- Manage stress
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Quit smoking
- Work together with medical professionals!

## EDUCATION & SUPPORT

CENTERS FOR DISEASE  
CONTROL & PREVENTION  
[www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure](http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure)

AMERICAN HEART  
ASSOCIATION  
[www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

MAYOCLINIC  
[www.mayoclinic.org/  
diseases-conditions/high-  
blood-pressure](http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure)