Blood Pressure Guidelines

The American College of Cardiology and American Heart Association have updated blood pressure recommendations.

Why new guidelines?

For the first time since 2003, a new set of guidelines have been created to find people at risk of high blood pressure before they need medication.

What is Blood Pressure?

Blood pressure is the amount of force that pushes on blood vessels throughout the body. Always having high blood pressure hurts blood vessels. It also damages the kidneys and heart.

It is measured in systolic and diastolic pressure.

- **Systolic** pressure is the force in the arteries when the heart pumps.
- **Diastolic** pressure is the force in the arteries when the heart is relaxed.

Measuring BP

When measuring BP, the **systolic** pressure goes on top, and **diastolic** on the bottom.

120 / 80

American College of Cardiology. New High Blood Pressure Guidelines. 2017

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Boston Scientific
CLOSE THE GAP
Health Equity for Life
# Blood Pressure Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blood Pressure</th>
<th>Systolic mmHg</th>
<th>Diastolic mmHg</th>
<th>Tips on Controlling Blood Pressure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Less than 120</td>
<td>Less than 80</td>
<td>Exercise at least 30 minutes a day; decreases BP by 4-9 mmHg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevated</td>
<td>Between 120-129</td>
<td>Less than 80</td>
<td>Eat less salt. Small reductions can lower BP by 2-8 mmHg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1</td>
<td>Between 130-139</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Healthy plant-focused diets can lower BP by up to 14 mmHg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2</td>
<td>140 or higher</td>
<td>90 or higher</td>
<td>Cigarettes increase your BP. Quitting helps maintain healthy levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertensive Crisis (Emergency, call 911)</td>
<td>Higher than 180</td>
<td>Higher than 120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Tips on Controlling Blood Pressure

1. Exercise at least 30 minutes a day; decreases BP by 4-9 mmHg
2. Eat less salt. Small reductions can lower BP by 2-8 mmHg
3. Healthy plant-focused diets can lower BP by up to 14 mmHg
4. Cigarettes increase your BP. Quitting helps maintain healthy levels

## How to Get an Accurate Blood Pressure

- **Relax for at least 5 minutes** before the reading is taken.
- **Does it fit?** The cuff should fit snugly around the arm.
- **Remove clothing from the area where the cuff will be.**
- **Sit, don’t lay.** Laying down can throw off the readings.
- **Sit with feet flat on the ground.**
- **The cuff should be at heart level.** Arms and back should be supported. Arm placement can cause the pressure to be too high or too low.
- **Don’t cross your legs.** It can increase the readings.

Learn more at: [http://www.your-heart-health.com](http://www.your-heart-health.com)

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2. Mayo Clinic. 10 Ways to Reduce Blood Pressure. 2015

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