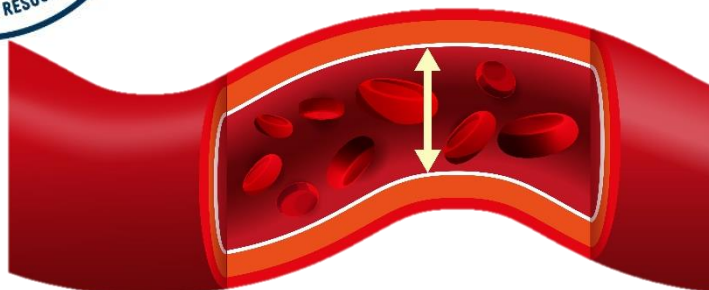




HYPERTENSION

Blood Pressure is the pressure exerted by circulating blood upon the walls of blood vessels. **High blood pressure (HBP)**, or **Hypertension**, is when that pressure is too high. The heart has to work harder to pump blood. Hypertension is a common condition, but untreated, it increases the risk of heart attack, stroke and other serious health problems. It's important to monitor blood pressure at all ages.



CAUSES

There are two main types of high blood pressure. **Primary hypertension** occurs most commonly. For most adults, there's no identifiable cause of high blood pressure. It tends to develop gradually over many years. Plaque buildup in the arteries, called atherosclerosis, increases the risk of high blood pressure. **Secondary hypertension** is caused by an underlying condition. It tends to appear suddenly and can cause higher (and sometimes dangerous) blood pressure readings than primary hypertension. It can be caused by:

- heart problems
- kidney disease
- obstructive sleep apnea
- thyroid problems
- adrenal gland tumors
- cough and cold medicines
- some pain relievers
- birth control pills
- tobacco and illegal drugs like cocaine/amphetamines



KNOW YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE NUMBERS

SYSTOLIC

This is the top number or first number displayed on the monitor. It measures the pressure in your arteries when the **heart contracts** (when it beats and pumps blood).

DIASTOLIC

This is the bottom number or second number displayed on the monitor. It measures the pressure in your arteries **between heart beats** (while the heart muscle is relaxing between contractions).

HEART RATE (HR)/PULSE (PUL)

Your heart rate is not part of your blood pressure, but is often displayed on the monitor. The heart rate (or pulse) number indicates the speed the heart is beating (beats per minute).





SYMPTOMS

Most people with hypertension have **no symptoms**, even if blood pressure readings reach dangerously high levels.

Though symptoms are not common, some people experience:

- Shortness of breath
- Severe headaches
- Buzzing in the ears
- Blurred vision
- Chest pain
- Anxiety or confusion
- Dizziness, nausea, vomiting
- Anxiety or confusion

DIAGNOSIS

Hypertension is diagnosed when a health care provider examines you and discusses your medical history and any symptoms. Often multiple blood pressure readings will be taken on separate occasions to accurately diagnose a patient and determine treatment options. **Home monitoring and tracking is helpful also.**



Other tests may be suggested to check for a cause of hypertension.

- Lab tests
- Electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG)
- Echocardiogram

TREATMENTS

Lifestyle changes can help to control and manage high blood pressure. These can include:

- Eating a heart healthy diet with less salt
- Getting regular physical activity
- Losing weight or maintaining a healthy weight
- Not using tobacco/nicotine & limiting alcohol
- Getting 7-9 hours of sleep per night

MEDICATIONS USED TO LOWER BP

- **Water pills (diuretics)** – help remove sodium from the body
- **ACE inhibitors & ARBs** – Relax blood vessels
- **Calcium Channel blockers** – slow heart rate and relax muscles in blood vessels
- **Alpha blockers** – reduce nerve signals to blood vessels
- **Alpha-beta blockers** – block nerve signals to blood vessels
- **Beta blockers** – reduce workload on the heart and widen vessels
- **Vasodilators** – stop muscles in the artery walls from tightening
- **Central-acting agents** – prevent the brain from increasing HR



Always take as prescribed.

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

Blood Pressure Categories



SCAN FOR NURSE T'S WEBSITE

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120-129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130-139	or	80-89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120



Reach out to Nurse T
for blood pressure education