



High Blood Pressure – 11 Steps to Normal

High blood pressure or *hypertension* currently affects 1 out of every 3 American adults. High blood pressure often has no signs or symptoms and is therefore called the “**silent killer**” as it is one of the most important factors leading to heart attacks, strokes, heart failure, kidney disease and early death. In 2017, the American College of Cardiology lowered the target levels in the management of high blood pressure.

Two numbers are recorded with blood pressure readings. The top number is called the **systolic** pressure reflecting the amount of pressure generated when the heart is contracting. The bottom number is the **diastolic** pressure that reflects the pressure when the heart is relaxing between beats.

	<u>Systolic</u>	<u>Diastolic</u>
Normal	<120	<80
Elevated	120-130	<80
Stage I Hypertension	130-140	80-89
Stage II Hypertension	>140	>90

Blood pressure changes constantly throughout the day to respond to what you are doing, thinking and feeling. Blood pressure readings in a doctor’s office are a snap-shot of the overall pressure. Some people have higher readings in the office than at home, a condition called “white coat hypertension”. Measuring blood pressure at home at various times of the day gives the most accurate idea of your true blood pressure. Home blood pressure digital monitors are available at most pharmacies.

Print the following two articles found under the **Longevity Lifestyle Articles** section of my website:

How to Take Your Blood Pressure at Home and Blood Pressure Chart

11 Steps that will help to lower your Blood Pressure (B.P)

1. **Monitor B.P.** at home. This will result in a more accurate assessment of your blood pressure.
2. **Regular exercise** improves blood vessel flexibility and heart function. It can be as simple as walking regularly and may decrease blood pressure by 10 points.
3. **Eat well.** The American Heart Association recommends the ‘Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension’ (DASH) diet. This diet emphasizes fruits and vegetables, low fat dairy products, whole grains, fish, poultry and nuts.
4. **Lose weight, if overweight.** Losing even 10% of your current weight can make a big difference.
5. **Stop smoking.** Nicotine constricts blood vessels and can cause a 20-point increase in your B.P.
6. **Drink alcohol in moderation.** Limit to one drink a day for women & two for men,
7. **Limit salt intake.** Too much sodium and too little potassium can increase blood pressure in people who are sensitive to salt. Aim for less the 1.5 grams of sodium and more than 4.7 grams of potassium daily.
8. **Sleep at least 7-8 hours a night.** Chronic sleep deprivation can contribute to high blood pressure and increased chance of developing heart disease.
9. **Reduce stress.** Mental and emotional stress can increase blood pressure. Meditation lowers stress and your B.P.
10. **Take prescribed blood pressure medication.** Taking blood pressure pills can keep you from having a stroke or heart attack.
11. **Blood Uric Acid** – make sure your level is Optimal