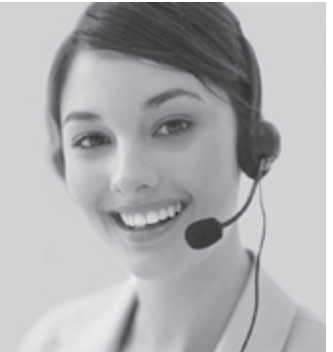


“It was great to talk with you.

Thank you for your interest in ‘What is Blood Pressure? What Do My Numbers Mean?’ I hope you find this tip sheet helpful.

Please give me a call if you have more questions about this or other topics.

As your health coach, I’m ready to help in any way I can.”



My blood pressure is: ____ / ____ mm Hg **Date:** _____

Blood pressure is ...

- The force of blood pushing against the blood vessel walls.
- Written as two numbers, such as 120/80 mm Hg (millimeters of mercury). (The first number is the force of the blood when the heart is beating. The second number is the force of the blood when the heart is resting between beats.)

What does my blood pressure mean?

- Less than 120/80 mm Hg: Desirable
- ≥120/80: Elevated risk
- ≥130/80: High risk
- Above 180/110 mm Hg: High blood pressure crisis or emergency
- Any blood pressure of 120/80 mm Hg or higher is a serious concern and needs to be addressed. If you have elevated risk for hypertension or any risk of hypertension, talk with your doctor about a treatment plan that is right for you.



What increases the risk of high blood pressure?

- Aging, pregnancy, and family history can raise your risk.
- African-Americans are at higher risk for high blood pressure than Caucasians or Mexican-Americans.
- The main risk factors include eating too much sodium, being overweight or obese, sleep apnea, smoking, drinking too much alcohol, and getting too little physical activity.

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UPMC HEALTH PLAN

What is Blood Pressure? What Do My Numbers Mean?

Why is high blood pressure dangerous?

- Left untreated, it can lead to heart attack, stroke, heart or kidney failure, or blindness.
- If managed well, your blood pressure can be kept in check.

How is high blood pressure treated?

- With certain lifestyle changes (see below) plus medicine(s) if needed.

The changes below can help you prevent or lower high blood pressure. Check those you would like to put into practice.

- Lose weight if you are overweight.
- Take all blood pressure medicines as prescribed.
- Be active. Build up to at least 150 minutes per week of moderate physical activity such as brisk walking or 75 minutes per week of vigorous physical activity such as jogging.
- Eat less sodium. Compare labels. Choose fresh foods more often than processed. Use herbs and spices instead of salt. Aim for less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium per day.
- If you drink alcohol, limit it to no more than one drink per day if you are a woman or two drinks per day if you are a man. One drink is 12 fluid ounces of beer, 5 fluid ounces of wine, or 1.5 fluid ounces of distilled spirits.
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. Aim for nine servings (4½ cups) per day.
- Drink 3 cups of nonfat or low-fat milk per day. One cup of nonfat or low-fat yogurt or 1.5 ounces of nonfat or low-fat cheese counts as 1 cup of milk.

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UPMC HEALTH PLAN

What is Blood Pressure? What Do My Numbers Mean?

Take action

	Check when completed
<p>My SMART goal for this week Do your best to reach the SMART* goal you set with your health coach. Write it here. Check the box when you have completed it.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Staying on the path to wellness When you are ready, choose one or two tips above that you would like to put into action. Set a weekly SMART goal for each one. Write your goals here. Check the boxes when you have completed them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ _____ • _____ _____ 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

*SMART goals are specific, measurable, appropriate, realistic, and timely. For example, "I will walk for 15 minutes during my lunch hour on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday this week."

SMART goals help you succeed! If you have any trouble setting your weekly SMART goals, ask your health coach for help.

The information in this tip sheet is for educational purposes only and is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice.

Sources:

- "2014 Evidence-Based Guidelines for the Management of High Blood Pressure in Adults: Report from the Panel Members Appointed to the Eighth Joint National Committee (JNC 8)." *JAMA*. 2014;311(5):507-520.
- "High Blood Pressure." American Heart Association. Available at http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HighBloodPressure/High-Blood-Pressure_UCM_002020_SubHomePage.jsp Accessed July 10, 2015.



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