1 UNDERSTAND READINGS

The first step to managing blood pressure is to understand what the levels mean and what is considered normal, elevated, high blood pressure (hypertension) and hypertensive crisis. heart.org/BPlevels

Blood pressure is typically recorded as two numbers, written as a ratio like this:

\[
\text{Systolic} \quad \frac{117}{76} \\
\text{Diastolic}
\]

Read as “117 over 76 millimeters of mercury.”

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY | SYSTOLIC mm Hg (top number) | DIASTOLIC mm Hg (bottom number)
--- | --- | ---
Normal | Lower than 120 and | Lower than 80 |
Elevated Blood Pressure | 120–129 and | 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 (Call your doctor immediately) | Higher than 180 and/or | Higher than 120 |

2 TRACK LEVELS

Health care providers can take blood pressure readings and provide recommendations. Check. Change. Control. helps you track your progress in reducing blood pressure. Track online at cctracker.com/AHA

LEARN MORE AT HEART.ORG/MYLIFECHECK AND HEART.ORG/HBP

3 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

**EAT SMART**

Eat a healthy diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, lean animal proteins and fish. Limit sodium, saturated fats and added sugars. Limit sugary foods and drinks, fatty or processed meats, salty foods, refined carbohydrates and highly processed foods. heart.org/EatSmart

**MOVE MORE**

Physical activity helps control blood pressure, weight and stress levels. heart.org/MoveMore

**MANAGE WEIGHT**

If you’re overweight, even a slight weight loss can reduce high blood pressure. heart.org/Weight

**DON’T SMOKE**

Every time you smoke, vape or use tobacco, the nicotine can cause a temporary increase in blood pressure. heart.org/Tobacco

**SLEEP WELL**

Short sleep (less than 6 hours) and poor-quality sleep are associated with high blood pressure.