

What does my blood pressure reading mean?

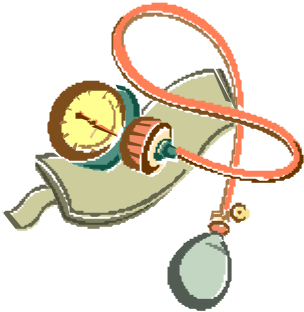
	Top number	Bottom number
Normal	less than 120	less than 80
Pre-HBP	120—139	80—89
Your body is undergoing changes which may lead to high blood pressure. Take steps to lower your high blood pressure.		
Stage 1	140—159	90—99
See your doctor within 1—2 weeks. Your high blood pressure is damaging your arteries and heart. This can lead to stroke, heart attack etc... You need to take steps to improve the control of your blood pressure.		
Stage 2	160—199	100—119
Your blood pressure is very high. See doctor or nurse within 1—2 days.		
Danger	Over 200	Over 120
Get immediate medical attention!		

Change in lifestyle	Reduction in top number of pressure
Weight loss	5—20 mmHg per 10 kg weight loss
Heart Healthy Eating	8—14 mmHg
Lower salt intake	2—8 mmHg
Increase aerobic activity to 30 min/day	4—9 mmHg
Moderate alcohol consumption	2—4 mmHg

Note: If you have diabetes or chronic kidney disease, your blood pressure goal is less than 130/80.

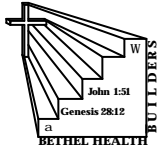
High Blood Pressure

The truth will set you free



BETHEL HEALTH BUILDERS

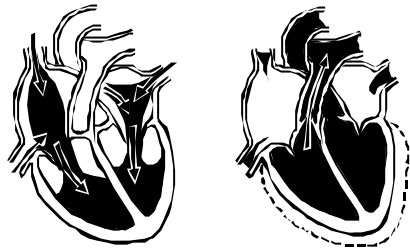
Belvedere Baptist Church (Tongaat)
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High Blood Pressure—Common but treatable

What is high blood pressure?

All the blood in the body is contained in the heart and in tubes called arteries. The heart is a hollow pump made of muscle.



The blood flows into it and then flows out through arteries which carry the blood to the body. Blood pressure readings consist of two numbers—for example: 112/79. The top number (112) indicates the pressure in the arteries when the heart muscle squeezes down and forces the blood out of the heart and into the arteries. The bottom number (79) indicates the pressure in the arteries when the heart relaxes.

What causes high blood pressure?

The arteries grow stiffer with age. Stress hormones raise blood pressure. Low levels of physical activity, being overweight,

high salt intake, too much alcohol and some illegal drugs can also contribute to raising blood pressure. Sometimes the body retains too much water and that makes the pressure in the arteries go up. The tendency to have high blood pressure seems to run in some families.

Why is it important for me to take steps to bring my blood pressure down?

High blood pressure damages the arteries. This can lead to stroke, dementia (slowed thinking and forgetfulness), angina, heart attack, heart failure, kidney failure, impotence and aortic aneurysm. Treatment of high blood pressure is very effective in preventing these conditions. For example, controlling your blood pressure can reduce your heart attack and stroke risk by 50%.

What can I do to bring my blood pressure down?

1. Lose weight. (Aim for a BMI of 18.5—24.9).
2. Eat lots of fruits and vegetables. Consume low-fat or no fat dairy products.

3. Reduce your intake of sodium to 2400 mg per day.
4. Do some type of aerobic activity like walking quickly for at least 30 minutes per day on most days of the week.
5. Either quit alcohol or limit to two drinks per day for men or one drink per day for women. If you can't reduce to this level on your own—get help.
6. Go to the health clinic regularly.
7. Take prescribed medications every day. Buy a pill organizer box to help you keep track of your medicines.
8. Get your blood pressure checked once a week until it is under good control. Keep your own record of your blood pressures.
9. Stop smoking.

