HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HBP)
HYPERTENSION

BLACK
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WELLNESS & PROSPERITY CENTER

High blood pressure (hypertension) is a condition when the blood flowing through your veins **puts increased pressure** on the walls of your arteries. If your blood pressure is high, your heart needs to work harder to support your body and organs.

Black women disproportionately experience hypertension, which can cause problems during and after pregnancy.

High blood pressure can cause preeclampsia or postpartum preeclampsia.

Preeclampsia a serious condition during pregnancy. Women with preeclampsia are more likely to experience preterm birth and to have a low birthweight baby. It is important to follow your providers recommendations about how to control blood pressure.

How do you know if you have high blood pressure?

During each provider visit, the vital signs are measured. This includes weight, height, blood pressure, and oxygen level. Without measuring it regularly, it may be difficult to determine if you have high blood pressure, as you may not experience noticable signs or symptoms.

Talk to your doctor right away if you have:

- New severe headache
- Blurry vision
- Abdominal pain only on right side

BLOOD PRESSURE CHART

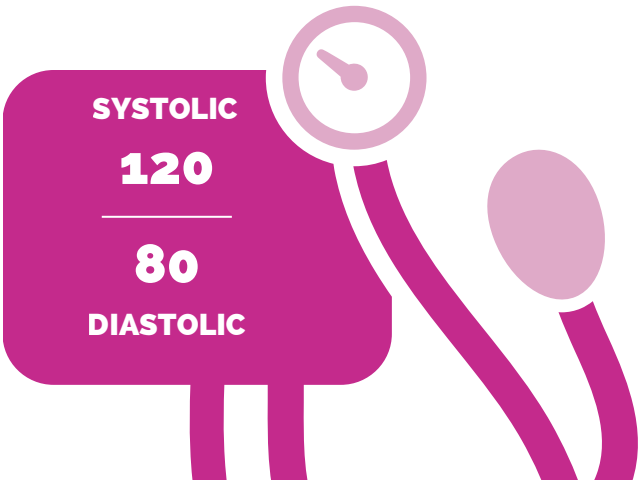
Normal: 120/80 and below
Elevated: 120-129 and below 80
High blood pressure - stage 1: 130 – 139 or 80-89
High blood pressure - stage 2: 140 or higher or 90 or higher
Crisis: 180 and higher and or higher than 120

How to interpret your results?

Blood pressure results are shown in two values.

The top number is the systolic pressure. It is the pressure inside the arteries when the heart beats.

The bottom number is the diastolic pressure. It is the pressure when the heart relaxes between two beats.



Pregnancy and blood pressure changes

During pregnancy the uterus grows to make room for the baby. In the pregnant body, the placenta and umbilical cord pass vital resources from mother to baby.

These changes increase blood circulation which may lead blood pressure values to rise and fall in the second trimester. Shortly after childbirth, the blood pressure should return to normal.

Tips for healthier blood pressure

- **Try to lower your stress level.** Negative stress can impact health outcomes
- **Exercise for at least 30 minutes.** Find an exercise that is safe, accessible, increases your heart rate, and enjoyable!
- **Avoid high sodium (salt) diet** and plan more meals with vegetables and fruits
- **Alcohol** may increase your blood pressure
- **Take your medications** as prescribed by your provider
- **Smoking can be a contributing factor** to high blood pressure. To get help, visit: Kickitca.org or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW, for free support
- Try to find out information about your **family health history**
- **Know your blood pressure.** Keeping a record and sharing it with providers can help you learn what is normal for you