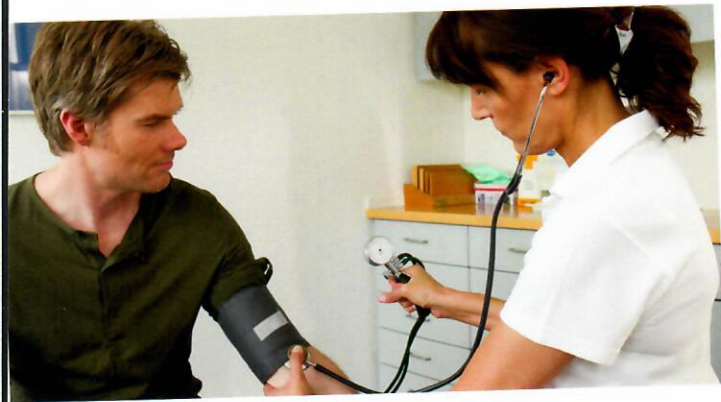


Heart Health



What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the inside of your blood vessels. If your blood pressure is too high, it puts you at increased risk for heart disease or stroke. High blood pressure often has no symptoms. The only way to know if you have high blood pressure is to check it.

Know your numbers

Blood pressure is measured with 2 numbers. It is measured in millimeters of mercury, or mm Hg.

140

90

The top number is the force of blood in your arteries when your heart contracts (or beats). This is called *systolic* (sis-TOL-lik) *pressure*.

The bottom number is the force of blood in your arteries in between beats. This is called *diastolic* (dye-a-STOL-lik) *pressure*.

The blood pressure goal for people who have both diabetes and high blood pressure (hypertension) is 140/90. But goals may vary based on a person's medical history. Talk with your health care provider about what your blood pressure goal should be.

Diabetes (high blood sugar) can be hard on your heart. If you also have high blood pressure or high cholesterol, your risk for heart damage may be higher. Learn more about managing your diabetes *and* having a healthy heart.

What is cholesterol?

Your blood contains a fat-like substance called *cholesterol* (coal-EST-ter-ol). There are 2 types of cholesterol:

- Low density lipoprotein, called *LDL* or “*bad*” *cholesterol*, can narrow and block your blood vessels
- High density lipoprotein, called *HDL* or “*good*” *cholesterol*, lowers your risk for blockage in your blood vessels

Triglycerides (try-GLISS-uh-rides) are a type of fat in your blood. Some fats are made in your body. Other fats come from food you eat.

Too much LDL or triglycerides can raise your risk for heart disease and stroke. On the other hand, high levels of HDL are good. They may lower your risk for heart attack and stroke.

Cholesterol goals

LDL: Below 100 mg/dL*

HDL: Above 50 mg/dL for women and above 40 mg/dL for men

Triglycerides: Below 150 mg/dL

See other side →

*This is a unit of measure. mg/dL means milligrams per deciliter.