

## If I have high blood pressure, what can I do to help control it?



Stay active. Get 30 minutes of exercise at least three days a week. Check with your doctor to determine the right exercise plan for you.



Eat healthy. Avoid foods that are high in salt, fat and sugar. Add more fruits, vegetables and whole grains to your meals.



Manage stress. Learn to relax and cope with your stress.



Maintain a healthy weight. Ask your doctor what a healthy weight is for you.



Quit smoking.



Cut down on drinking alcohol.



Check your blood pressure often. You can do this at your doctor's office, at home, or in a local pharmacy.



See your doctor often. Ask your doctor how to better manage your high blood pressure. Follow your doctor's treatment plan.

For health education information like smoking cessation:

Call the Health Education Information Line at 1-800-804-6074 (TTY/TDD: 711). Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
[www.CalVivaHealth.org](http://www.CalVivaHealth.org)

Want to quit smoking?

Call the California Smokers Helpline at

Call 1-800-NO BUTTS or 1-800-662-8887 (TTY/TDD: 711).

Counselors are available weekdays, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

# Simple/Easy Tips to Control Your High Blood Pressure

DO IT FOR YOUR HEALTH



This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Please always follow your health care provider's instructions. Programs and services are subject to change.

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## Know the signs of high blood pressure

Check your blood pressure level in the table provided. Blood pressure numbers include systolic and diastolic pressures.

- **Systolic** blood pressure is the pressure when the heart beats while pumping blood.
- **Diastolic** blood pressure is the pressure when the heart is at rest between beats.
- You will see blood pressure numbers written with the systolic number above or before the diastolic number, such as 120/80.

The table shows normal numbers for adults. It also shows which numbers put you at greater risk for health problems. Keep in mind:

- Blood pressure may change throughout the day. This is true even in people who have normal blood pressure.
- If your numbers stay above normal most of the time, you're at risk. You'll need to take actions to control your blood pressure.

## What is High Blood Pressure?

When you have high blood pressure, your heart has to pump harder than it should to get blood to all parts of your body. This is also known as hypertension.

Blood pressure is the force of the blood pushing against the walls of the blood vessel. When high blood pressure is not controlled, it may cause a heart attack, stroke or even death.

Check out the American Heart Association (AHA) blood pressure table.

| Blood Pressure Category                               | Systolic (mmHg) (upper number) | Diastolic (mmHg) (lower number) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Normal  | Less than 120 and              | Less than 80                    |
| Elevated  | 120-129 and                    | Less than 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 (consult your doctor immediately) | Higher than 180 and/or         | Higher than 120                 |