

WORRIED ABOUT BLOOD PRESSURE?

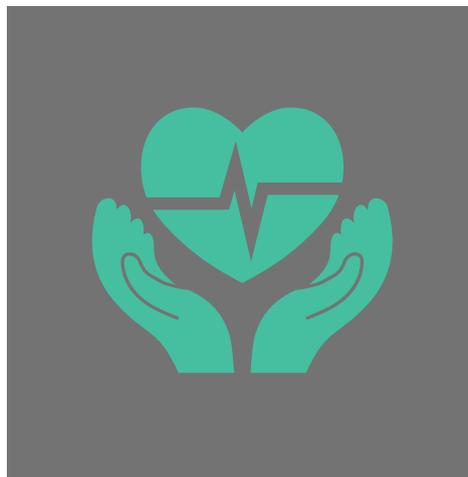


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A complete
guide to
knowing your
numbers



Worried about your Blood Pressure?

Use our helpful guide to help you understand your numbers

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Approximately one third of people who are living with High Blood Pressure do not know they have it. The best way to understand your Blood Pressure is by checking it regularly.

Worried about your Blood Pressure? Here's what you need to know



Healthy blood pressure plays a vital role in our long-term health and wellbeing so it is really important that we are aware of what our blood pressure should be, and how we can keep it under control.

1. What is Blood Pressure?

Blood pressure is the pressure that your circulating blood places on the walls of your blood vessels as it travels around your body.

2. How often should you get it checked?

If you haven't been diagnosed with high blood pressure, it is recommended that you get your blood pressure checked at least once every 5 years.[1]

If you have a higher blood pressure reading, you will need to have it checked at least once a year or more, depending on the advice of your GP.

3. What is high blood pressure - or Hypertension?

High Blood Pressure puts extra strain onto your arteries and your heart as they try to move the blood around your body.

The strain of high blood pressure over a period of time can cause the arteries to become thicker and less flexible - or it can cause them to weaken which can have a serious effect on your long-term health.

Consistently high blood pressure is diagnosed as Hypertension[2], and due to a lack of noticeable symptoms this is often labelled as a 'silent killer'. The best way to monitor and manage your Blood Pressure is through regular checks.

"High blood pressure is the biggest known cause of disability and premature death in the UK through stroke, heart attack and heart disease. One in three adults in the UK has high blood pressure and every day 350 people have a preventable stroke or heart attack caused by the condition." **Blood Pressure UK**

[1] NHS UK <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/blood-pressure-test/>

[2] NHS UK <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-pressure-hypertension/>



4. What are the causes of High Blood Pressure?



In most cases the exact causes of High Blood Pressure are not clear, but there are a number of contributing factors to be aware of. Some (such as a family history of High Blood Pressure, or age) are not preventable.

However, many of the main causes of High Blood Pressure are linked to lifestyle choices, and some mindful changes can have a positive effect.

These include:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Keeping yourself fit and active
- Eating a healthy, well-balanced diet
- Avoiding excess salt and processed sugars
- Giving up smoking
- Avoiding heavy drinking
- Long term sleep deprivation

Visit **NHS UK** for a full list of the causes of High Blood Pressure. [3]

High and Low Blood Pressure can affect anyone - regardless of age so it is important to take regular checks no matter how old you are! **Blood Pressure UK**

5. Who is most at risk of High Blood Pressure?

Hypertension can affect anyone, but general health and lifestyle can contribute to a rise in Blood Pressure (see above).

Recent studies [4] have highlighted that Millennials (those aged between 18-38) are the age-group most at risk of developing high Blood Pressure, with work pressures being a common worry.

More than a quarter of Millennials (28%) claim that working through stress is expected in their job. This is compared to just 12% of people aged between 53-71.

The best way to determine if stress is causing your Blood Pressure to rise is by taking regular checks and monitoring your readings, using tools like the Kinetik Wellbeing Online Blood Pressure Checker.

[3] NHS UK, Causes of Hypertension <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-pressure-hypertension/causes/>

[4] Kinetik Wellbeing, Blood Pressure Survey for Know Your Numbers Week 2018, <https://www.kinetikwellbeing.com/millennials-revealed-risk-developing-high-blood-pressure/>



6. What should my Blood Pressure be?



Your Blood Pressure reading consists of two numbers - like a fraction. The top number is your systolic blood pressure (this should be the highest number).

Your systolic reading is the pressure on blood vessels as your heart pushes blood around your body.

The bottom number is your diastolic blood pressure (this number should be the lowest), and is the lowest pressure on your blood vessels when your heart relaxes between beats.

A healthy Blood Pressure reading should be between **90 / 60 mmHg (90 over 60)** and **120/80 mmHg (120 over 80)**.

A high Blood Pressure reading of **140/90 mmHg or more** is considered high, and if this becomes a consistent reading you may need to visit your doctor.

A reading of **less than 90/60 mmHg** indicates low Blood Pressure (Hypotension)[5].

These readings are based on UK guidelines set by NICE (National Institute for Health Care and Excellence)[6]

"High Blood Pressure is a level consistently at or above 140mmHg and/or 90mmHg." Blood Pressure UK

7. What are the symptoms of High Blood Pressure?

High Blood Pressure is often referred to as the 'silent killer' because it has no recognisable symptoms. The most reliable way to determine if you are at risk of Hypertension is by knowing your numbers and taking regular blood pressure checks.

For more information on the symptoms of prolonged Hypertension, visit the **British Heart Foundation** website - www.bhf.org

[5] NHS UK, Hypotension: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/low-blood-pressure-hypotension/>

[6] NICE, Blood Pressure Reading Guidelines <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg127/chapter/1-Guidance>



8. What can High Blood Pressure lead to?



Hypertension can affect your overall health, and can lead to a number of health conditions, including:

- Heart attack or heart failure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Aortic Aneurysms
- Diabetes

These are the most serious conditions caused by high blood pressure. For more information on the complications of Hypertension please visit the British Heart Foundation website - www.bhf.org

9. How can I check my Blood Pressure?

You can ask your GP or a pharmacist for a Blood Pressure check or monitor it regularly with a home Blood Pressure monitor.

When taking your Blood Pressure at home remember:

- Check at the same time each day
- Take an average of 3 readings each time as sometimes your Blood Pressure can spike on the first reading
- Take your Blood Pressure when your heart is at rest
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol before you check your Blood Pressure

10. Where can I find out more information?

Kinetik Wellbeing post regular articles on Blood Pressure health, visit our health blog at www.kinetikwellbeing.com/news. You can find answers to other Frequently Asked Questions about Blood Pressure at www.kinetikwellbeing.com/support.

You can also visit:

- NHS UK
- British Heart Foundation
- British Society of Hypertension
- Blood Pressure UK

Find out what your reading means by entering your numbers into the Kinetik online blood pressure tool

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