

# Understanding Blood Pressure



## What is high blood pressure?

Having high blood pressure (also known as hypertension) means that the pressure of the blood flowing through your veins and blood vessels is higher than it should be. Many people have high blood pressure and don't even know it.

## How do you know if you have high blood pressure?

The best way to learn if you have high blood pressure it is to have your blood pressure checked.

## Blood pressure is measured in two numbers.

The first number, called systolic blood pressure, is your blood pressure when your heart beats.

The second number, called diastolic blood pressure, is your blood pressure when your heart is resting between beats.

If your blood pressure is **120** systolic and **80** diastolic, you would say **120 over 80** or write 120/80 mm Hg.

	BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC MM HG (UPPER NUMBER)		DIASTOLIC MM HG (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 – 90
	High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2	140 or Higher	or	90 or Higher
	Hypertensive Crisis (Consult your primary provider immediately)	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 120



» Please contact your primary care provider at (907) 729-3300 if you have any questions about your blood pressure.

Sources: cdc.gov and heart.org