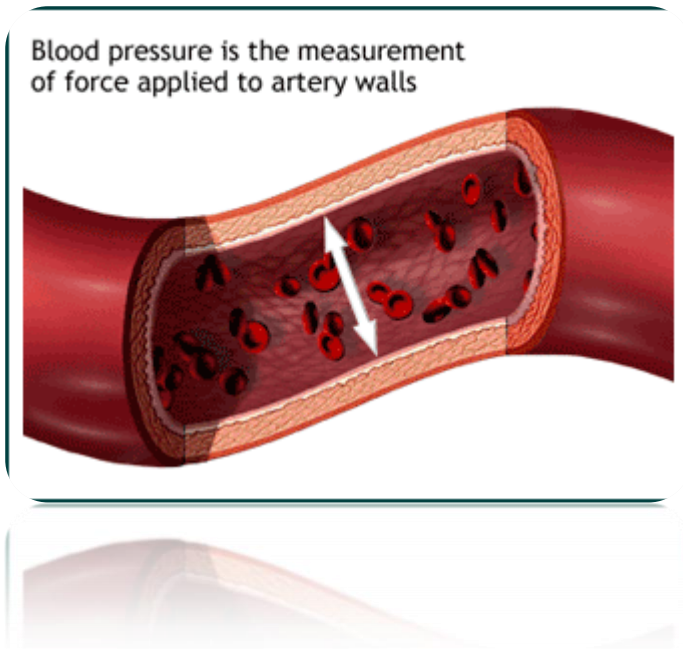


HIGH PRESSURE

High blood pressure (HBP) is a serious condition that can lead to [coronary heart disease](#) ,[heart failure](#), [stroke](#), [kidney failure](#), and other health problems. "Blood pressure" is the force of blood pushing against the walls of the arteries as the heart pumps blood. If this pressure rises and stays high over time, it can damage the body in many ways.



Blood pressure is measured as systolic (sis-TOL-ik) and diastolic (di-ah-STOL-ik) pressures. "Systolic" refers to blood pressure when the heart beats while pumping blood. "Diastolic" refers to blood pressure when the heart is at rest between beats. You most often will see blood pressure numbers written with the systolic number above or before the diastolic number, such as 120/80 mmHg. (The mmHg is millimeters of mercury—the units used to measure blood pressure.)The table below shows normal blood pressure numbers for adults. It also shows which numbers put you at greater risk for health problems.

Categories for Blood Pressure Levels in Adults (measured in millimeters of mercury, or mmHg)

Category	Systolic (top number)		Diastolic (bottom number)
Normal	Less than 120	<i>And</i>	Less than 80
Prehypertension	120–139	<i>Or</i>	80–89
High blood pressure			
Stage 1	140–159	<i>Or</i>	90–99

Stage 2	160 or higher	<i>Or</i>	100 or higher
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Your systolic and diastolic numbers may not be in the same blood pressure category. In this case, the more severe category is the one you're in. For example, if your systolic number is 160 and your diastolic number is 80, you have stage 2 HBP. If your systolic number is 120 and your diastolic number is 95, you have stage 1 HBP. If you have diabetes or chronic kidney disease, HBP is defined as 130/80 mmHg or higher. HBP numbers also differ for children and teens.

