



Understanding Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the force of your blood pushing against your blood vessels. When the heart beats, it creates pressure that pushes blood through your circulatory system - your veins, arteries and capillaries. The first reading is the pressure in your veins when your heart is pumping. This is your **systolic pressure**, which is higher due to increased pressure in the blood vessels. The second reading is the pressure in your veins when your heart is at rest between beats. This is your **diastolic pressure**, which is lower due to a decrease in pressure.

High Blood Pressure (HBP) or Hypertension is when the pressure in your blood vessels is consistently too high. This causes harm by forcing the heart and blood vessels to work harder, but less efficiently. Over time high blood pressure can cause damage to the delicate tissues in your blood vessels, which can allow for more plaque build up in the tiny tears. This is called **atherosclerosis**, which leads to thickening of the blood vessel walls and the narrowing of the channel, reducing blood flow to the body. Blood pressure then raises further and perpetuates a vicious cycle that can result in vision loss, kidney disease, heart attack or stroke.

High Blood Pressure is known as the “**Silent Killer**” as there are often no signs or symptoms until a major event occurs. The best prevention is to **know your numbers** and make healthy changes to prevent and manage high blood pressure.

Know Your Numbers: Blood Pressure Reading

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic in mm Hg (upper)		Diastolic in mm Hg (lower)
Normal	LESS THAN 120	AND	LESS THAN 80
Elevated	120 - 129	AND	LESS THAN 80
Hypertension Stage 1	130 - 139	OR	80 - 89
Hypertension Stage 2	140 OR HIGHER	OR	90 OR HIGHER
Hypertensive Crisis (seek medical attention immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	AND /OR	HIGHER THAN 120

Source: heart.org

Contact your onsite Health Coach for more information:

Allison Knight, NBC-HWC, NDTR, CPT
National Board Certified Health & Wellness Coach,
Nutrition & Dietetic Technician, Registered & Certified Personal Trainer
262.804.1068 • allisonknight@employeehc.com