

## OCTOBER HEALTH TOPIC OF THE MONTH: HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Blood Pressure (BP) is a measure of the force of blood pushing against blood vessels (arteries). The heart pumps blood into blood vessels which carry the blood to other parts of the body. High blood pressure occurs when the pressure of blood flowing through blood vessels is consistently high

## Blood Pressure Reading

Understanding your blood pressure readings is key to controlling high blood pressure. A blood pressure reading has a top number (systolic) and bottom number (diastolic). The top number indicates how much pressure your blood exerts against your arteries when the heart beats. The bottom number indicates how much pressure your blood exerts against your artery walls when the heart is resting between beats. The ranges are;

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mmHg (upper#)		Diastolic mmHg (lower#)
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Prehypertension	120 - 139	or	80 - 89
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1	140 - 159	or	90 - 99
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2	160 Or higher	or	100 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis (Emergency Care Needed)	Higher than 180	or	Higher than 110

## What Causes High Blood Pressure

The exact cause of high blood pressure is not known but several factors and conditions may play a role in its development including;

- Smoking
- Obesity or being overweight
- Lack of physical activity
- Too much salt in the diet
- Too much alcohol consumption (more than 1 to 2 drinks per day)
- Stress
- Old age
- Family history of high blood pressure
- Chronic kidney disease
- Lack of rest or sleep

## Prevention and Management of High Blood pressure

- Regular exercise and losing weight
- Health eating
- Reduction of salt intake
- Reducing alcohol consumption
- Lowering caffeine consumption
- Smoking cessation
- Management of stress and enough sleep
- Hypertension treatment



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