



# Blood Pressure Facts

## What is Blood Pressure?<sup>i</sup>

Blood pressure is a measure of force of blood pumping against the walls of your blood vessels. It can rise and fall throughout the day<sup>ii</sup>, but when it is high for a long time it can lead to other health problems, including heart disease and stroke. Certain genetic factors can affect blood pressure, including age and ethnicity, as well as other lifestyle risk factors. You and your health care provider can keep track of your blood pressure to see if you are at risk.

	Blood Pressure Levels
Normal	120/80* mmHG
Medium Risk	121-139/80-89 mmHG
High Risk	140+/90 mmHG



## Exercise and Blood Pressure

- ✓ Physical activity can help manage and improve your blood pressure
- ✓ Aerobic activities (ones that get your heart pumping faster) will especially help to improve your blood pressure
- ✓ Try and aim for 150 minutes of aerobic activity per week
- ✓ After exercise your blood pressure will DECREASE! This decrease can last for several hours!
- ✓ Remember to stay safe and have fun when being physically active!





## Diet and Blood Pressure

- ✓ A healthy diet can help to lower blood pressure
- ✓ It is recommended to consume 5-10 servings of fruit and vegetables per day
- ✓ Diets that are rich in fruits and vegetables and low in salt are the best ways to help lower blood pressure
- ✓ Foods high in salt are processed/packaged and include:
  - Deep fried foods, salty snacks (like chips), takeout food, restaurant meals, hot dogs, sausage, and canned meats
  - Read the sodium content on food labels – stick with foods that have less than 5% of your daily value<sup>iii</sup>



## Smoking and Blood Pressure

- ✓ Smoking can increase your risk of developing high blood pressure
- ✓ If you smoke, talk to your doctor about quitting smoking
- ✓ Quitting isn't easy – there are many resources available to help you on your journey to quitting
  - NWT Quitline is a confidential & toll free help line for people who want to quit – resources available at 1-866-286-5099 or online at [www.nwtquitline.ca](http://www.nwtquitline.ca)
  - Information & resources for quitting: [www.gosmokefree.ca](http://www.gosmokefree.ca) or [www.lung.ca](http://www.lung.ca)
- ✓ If you do not smoke, limit your exposure to second hand smoke as much as possible

Your blood pressure today: \_\_\_\_\_



If you have any follow up questions, or are concerned about your blood pressure reading today, please do not hesitate to contact your health care provider.

\*Target blood pressure should be less than 140/90 in most patients, including those with chronic kidney disease. In patients with diabetes, blood pressure targets are less than 130/80. In the very elderly (age >80 years), the systolic target is 150. Caution should be exercised in elderly patients who are frail and in CAD patients with low diastolic blood pressure (<60).

<sup>i</sup> Heart and Stroke Foundation (2014). Getting your blood pressure in check. Retrieved from [http://www.heartandstroke.com/site/c.ikiQLcMWJtE/b.3484023/k.2174/Heart\\_disease\\_\\_High\\_blood\\_pressure.htm](http://www.heartandstroke.com/site/c.ikiQLcMWJtE/b.3484023/k.2174/Heart_disease__High_blood_pressure.htm)

<sup>ii</sup> CDC (2015). Know the facts about high blood pressure. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/facts.htm>

<sup>iii</sup> Hypertension Canada (2014). How do I prevent high blood pressure? Retrieved from <http://www.hypertension.ca/en/hypertension/what-do-i-need-to-know/how-do-i-prevent-high-blood-pressure>