



High Blood Pressure in People with Diabetes: Are you at risk?

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the force of blood against your blood vessels as it circulates through your body. This force is necessary to make blood flow, delivering nutrients and oxygen throughout your body.

What is high blood pressure?

Blood pressure varies throughout the day, but if it is usually above the healthy range, it is called high blood pressure or hypertension. Most people do not feel high blood pressure.

High blood pressure means there is too much pressure in your blood vessels. This high pressure can damage your blood vessels and cause health problems such as stroke, heart attack, kidney failure, sexual dysfunction and eye problems.

People with diabetes are twice as likely to have high blood pressure. Having high blood pressure with diabetes increases your risk for health complication like the ones listed above.

What do blood pressure numbers mean?

There are two numbers in a blood pressure (BP) reading, for example 130/80. The top number is systolic pressure (SYS). It's the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart beats.

The bottom number is diastolic pressure (DIA). It is the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart is at rest, between beats.

Blood pressure for people with diabetes should be less than **130/80 mmHg**.

Know your numbers!

Your BP goes up and down at different times and for different reasons. The first time it is above 130/80 does not mean you have high blood pressure.

- Ask your health care provider what a safe BP is for you. When your BP is higher or lower than this, be sure to talk to your doctor so you can get prompt treatment.
- Ask to have your BP checked at each visit with your doctor or nurse.
- Check your own BP with an approved BP monitor, at home or at your pharmacy.
- Keep a record of your BP results and bring it with you to all medical or clinic visits.

High Blood Pressure Management

Diabetes can make it harder to control blood pressure. You may need medication, and often three or more kinds of pills may be needed to bring blood pressure under control.

Even when it is under control you will need to live a healthy lifestyle. High BP pills only work if you take them. Do not stop taking your medicine without talking to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist first.



What else can I do?

- ✓ Stay active with regular physical activity such as brisk walking (30 to 60 minutes, at least 3 days a week).
- ✓ Eat a healthy diet rich in vegetables and fruit, low in sodium (salt) and saturated and trans fat.
- ✓ Maintain a healthy weight.
- ✓ Limit alcohol – less than 2 standard drinks per day.
- ✓ Be smoke-free.
- ✓ Control stress. Physical activity can help you manage stress.
- ✓ Check your blood pressure at home and bring the record to your diabetes visits along with your blood sugars.

Get started right now!

Remember, BP for people with diabetes should be less than 130/80. Talk to your doctor about a target level for your BP.

Check your blood pressure and write it down.

For the blood pressure log/tracking form (sample of log is below) please go to: www.hypertension.ca

Learn more about blood pressure

Hypertension Canada
www.hypertension.ca

Canadian Diabetes Association
Phone: 1 800 BANTING (226-8464) or
www.diabetes.ca

Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada
Phone: 1-888-HSF-INFO (473-4636)
www.heartandstroke.ca

SAMPLE

DATE		TIME	COMMENTS	Heart Rate (beats per minute)	BP Reading #1 (mmHg)		BP Reading #2 (mmHg)	
					Systolic	Diastolic	Systolic	Diastolic
June 15	Sample Morning	8:00 AM	Meds at 9 AM		138	82	135	80
	Sample Evening	8:00 PM	Upset		157	92	154	90
	Day 1 Morning							
	Day 1 Evening							
	Day 2 Morning							
	Day 2 Evening							
	Day 3 Morning							
	Day 3 Evening							
	Day 4 Morning							
	Day 4 Evening							
	Day 5 Morning							
	Day 5 Evening							
	Day 6 Morning							
	Day 6 Evening							
	Day 7 Morning							
	Day 7 Evening							
	Average							