

MEASURE UP/PRESSURE DOWN™ PRESENTS

CIRCULATION NATION

Your Roadmap To Managing
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE





Circulation Nation

YOUR ROADMAP TO MANAGING HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure doesn't have to slow you down on the highway of life. Wherever you call home and wherever you roam, a few steps can help keep your condition in control.

High blood pressure, or hypertension, means that the force of blood pushing through your body is too strong. That pressure puts a strain on your arteries – the highways of the body. High blood pressure can lead to stroke or heart disease, two of America's top causes of death.

Some states and regions show higher rates of high blood pressure, but in the end, it's everyone's concern. Nearly one in three Americans has this condition, and approximately 20 percent are unaware they even have the disease. Controlling and managing high blood pressure is a personal journey.

Measure Up/Pressure Down™ has gathered the best tips from the largest and most respected medical groups across the nation – and you can start putting these into practice right away. You'll find even more easy-to-use guidance and information at MeasureUpPressureDown.com.

Ready? Let's hit the road.



MIAMI FLORIDA

EAT
RIGHT

“What's life without all the flavor?”

MEET **DONNA**

Throughout her neighborhood, Donna is renowned for her home cooking. From jerk chicken to mango salsa, food means fun, tradition, and love. She knows she has to eat less salt and less fat to control her blood pressure. But she's determined to stay true to her passion and her roots. Inventive recipes and dialing up the herbs and spices make the difference.

You don't need to give up everything you like – just fine-tune to get less salt and harmful fats. Why?

- Too much salt in your diet makes your body hold on to more water, which raises your blood pressure and puts strain on your heart and kidneys.
- A diet high in harmful fats can play a role in developing heart disease or raising blood pressure.
- Sure, it matters what you eat – but too much food of any kind can cause you to gain weight which can also lead to higher blood pressure.



The Do's and Don'ts of Eating Right

GO

DO: Potassium

In your body, too much sodium raises your blood pressure, but potassium balances out the extra salt. Where do you get this potassium? Plain baked potatoes, for starters. Also try bananas, avocados, dried apricots, plain yogurt, raw spinach, and cooked white beans.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1-1/2 cups
Servings Per Container 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 250 **Calories from Fat** 70

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g **12%**

Saturated Fat 2g **10%**

Trans Fat 0g

Sodium 240mg **10%**

Potassium **5%**

STOP

DON'T: Sodium

Salt shows up where you don't expect it. Nearly half of the sodium we consume comes from 10 food categories: bread and rolls, cold cuts/cured meats, pizza, poultry, soups, sandwiches, cheese, pasta mixed dishes, meat mixed dishes, and savory snacks.

Start reading the labels to track your nutrients and pay special attention to parts of the diet that can get your blood pressure out of whack. Learn your limits:

- **SODIUM:** 1,500 mg daily for those with high blood pressure (2,300 mg for others)
- **POTASSIUM:** 4,700 mg a day of potassium
- **SATURATED FATS:** less than 10 percent of your daily calories
- **TRANS FATS:** as low as possible

STOP

DON'T: Harmful Fats

Full flavor without all the fat is possible. Saturated and trans fats are two types of dangerous fats found in commercial baked goods (think cookies and crackers) and animal products (red meat and dairy products like whole-milk, cheese, sour cream, butter, and ice cream).

Delicious recipes and smart cooking tips for people with high blood pressure are a mouse click away. Check [MeasureUpPressure Down.com](http://MeasureUpPressureDown.com) for recipes, cooking tips, and healthy eating plans.



**"I don't have to run a marathon –
I just have to get moving."**

MEET BRETT

Brett used to be the star quarterback of his high school team, but now, in his late 40s, his two-a-days and drills are a fading memory. His blood pressure is up, and his wife is worried – he knows he needs to get moving again. So he makes every minute matter: Playing with his kids, hunting, fishing, line dancing – as long as you're out of the chair, it counts.

**Let's get moving.
Why?**

- People who are inactive tend to have higher heart rates.
- The higher your heart rate, the harder your heart must work – and the higher your blood pressure goes.
- Lack of physical activity also increases your risk of being overweight, which can lead to higher blood pressure.



It's Time to Be Active

Every minute counts.

It takes only 30 minutes of physical activity a day to lower blood pressure. That's the same amount of time it takes to watch your favorite sitcom, catch up with a friend or family member on the phone, or drive to the store and back.

So track every minute you move:

- Incorporate activity into your daily life. Start with small steps, like parking farther from the store, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, playing actively with your kids, or going for a walk around the block at lunch.
- Free or low-cost activity tracking via computer or phone keeps your activity total at your fingertips. Try the American Heart Association's Heart360® tool or download the Withings Health Mate app to stay on top of your fitness.
- Mark a wall chart with activity minutes so your family sees that your health is a priority.

It's more common for high blood pressure to show up in men when they're in early middle age. Start moving today, and improve your odds of prevention.





“You have to speak up for yourself – no one else can do it for you.”

MEET JODY

Widowed in her 60s, independent Jody takes pride in “never making a fuss.” But managing blood pressure means speaking frankly about concerns and side effects and learning to work with your healthcare team. Jody helps herself by checking her blood pressure at the local pharmacy and keeping a list of questions between doctor visits.

You're dealing with a potential killer. This is not the time to be the strong, silent type. Share any questions and concerns with your doctor. Why?

- Changes in your blood pressure can hint at a bigger problem that your provider can help you understand and fix.
- Medication side effects can be serious and interfere with your treatment.
- Other health conditions can make high blood pressure worse.



Communication Tips

Pressure down, write it down

To make it easier to communicate with your doctor and healthcare professionals, write down your concerns between visits. Million Hearts® created a Blood Pressure Journal you can use — available on the Measure Up/Pressure Down™ website. You can record your blood pressure, list your medications, and note questions for your doctor or pharmacist with this tool. Our site also has more tools for good teamwork and communication.

Ask questions

Prepare a list of questions for your provider so that you can make the most of your time and get the answers you need to improve your blood pressure and health at your next appointment.

- What is my blood pressure reading today?
- What is my goal blood pressure?
- How can I better manage my blood pressure?
- What is the name of my blood pressure medication?
- How often and when should I take it?
- What are the side effects of this medication?
- What do I need to know about my blood pressure medication?

Hard for you to get to a doctor's office?

You may find routine care options through a pharmacy, clinic, or mobile care van.



SAN JOSÉ
CALIFORNIA

Silicon Valley



**TRACK
YOUR
NUMBERS**

“Blood pressure is more than just a number. Knowing it can save your life.”

MEET **ANDRE**

What are your numbers? Software developer Andre put his tech-savvy brain to work protecting his heart, testing his blood pressure a few times a week and using tracking tools on his smartphone. As an African-American man, he knows his risk is higher. Taking steps now can prevent heart disease and stroke down the road.

It's especially important for African-Americans to pay attention to blood pressure.

Why?

- They may develop high blood pressure at a younger age.
- They may find their high blood pressure is harder to control.
- African-American adults have higher rates of early death from causes related to high blood pressure.



Hints for Tracking Your Numbers

SAMPLE READING: $\frac{120}{80}$ mmHG

SYSTOLIC: (Top Number)

Pressure at the moment your heart beats

DIASTOLIC: (Bottom Number)

Pressure at the moment between heartbeats

HIGH

SYSTOLIC 140 or above
DIASTOLIC 90 or above

PRE-HIGH

SYSTOLIC between 121–139
DIASTOLIC between 81–89

NORMAL

SYSTOLIC 120 or less
DIASTOLIC 80 or less

Where to check?

• DOCTOR'S OFFICE:

Should be done during every visit, for any reason.

• PHARMACY:

Many have free machines.

• AT HOME:

You'll find a range of cost options (and some free!) for manual or electronic devices. Ask your physician or pharmacist to help you find the right option for you. Some of these devices record your results or can be connected to your tablet or phone, like the Withings Blood Pressure Monitor. Others, like Heart360® allow you to input your readings as often as you need.

Get a good read

- Don't have coffee or caffeine and don't smoke 30 minutes before a reading.
- Don't talk or eat while you check.
- Sit with your back supported and both feet on the floor.
- Get the cuff on your bare arm, not over your sleeve.
- Take more than one reading, especially if you get unusual numbers. All kinds of factors, from exercise to cold weather, can throw your blood pressure off.

Remember to talk with your healthcare provider to determine an appropriate blood pressure goal and treatment plan that's specific to your health.

NEW YORK CITY

**“I used to thrive on chaos –
until the day it almost killed me.”**

MEET **SAMI**

As a lawyer, Sami does 24/7 crisis control. A phone call or court date always seemed to come up just when it was time to take his blood pressure medication. After chest pain and an unplanned visit to the ER, he knew he needed to create a medication routine. He set up a buddy system with his cousin – they now text each other daily reminders. Because Sami always has his phone within reach, the system works.

Take your medication as prescribed.
Why?

- Blood pressure medications only work when you take them as your provider tells you. Once started, they should begin to work within days. Do not stop until your provider tells you to stop.
- Take your medication every day at the same time. It's just as important to take your prescription on days when you're feeling good as it is on days when you're not.
- Using medication in addition to healthy lifestyle changes can help you maintain a healthy blood pressure.



How to Start a Good Habit

- Put reminders where you (or others) will see them. In the kitchen, at the office, on your computer – make it so you can't miss it.
- Plan ahead for your refills so you don't skip any medicine. Your pharmacy may even offer a 90-day prescription that costs less.
- Get a buddy and remind each other.
- Use social media: Follow Measure Up/Pressure Down™ or other health organizations' Twitter or Facebook accounts to keep your medication top of mind.
- Download a wallet card from the Measure Up/Pressure Down™ website and easily track every time you take a medication.



DANGER:

Never stop taking medication without talking to your doctor first.



“Every day, I find a moment for myself.

MEET **LISA**

You'll always find Lisa helping others – within her family and through her demanding job as a social worker. She loves what she does, but the stress that comes with it takes a toll on her blood pressure. So she's made a commitment to have a strong spiritual practice and keep close community ties: These are her personal stress-busters.

Unmanaged stress affects your mind and body and even has lasting impact on your health and well-being.

Why?

- High levels of stress can lead to temporary but dramatic increases in blood pressure.
- Continued stress can keep your blood pressure high and lead to further heart problems.



Ways to Reduce Stress

- Know what triggers in your life make stress worse – perhaps overeating, alcohol, tobacco, worrying, or lack of sleep – and avoid them as much as possible.
- Create your own personal stress-busters like laughter, time spent in nature, enough sleep, pets, meditation, listening to music, and counting to 10. All good ways to lower stress.
- African Americans who attend places of worship tend to live longer and have happier, healthier lives, according to research cited by the Association of Black Cardiologists.

Stress-Busting Tools

- Use the Association of Black Cardiologists' 7 Steps to A Healthy Heart interactive guide to find more stress management ideas that are right for you – available through the Measure Up/Pressure Down™ website or at <http://abc-patient.com/7Steps/#/1/>.
- Check your stress with a stress test and tips from The Cleveland Clinic, available at <http://my.clevelandclinic.org/heart/prevention/stress/stressheart.aspx>.



Find healthy ways to cope so that you can avoid the negative consequences of stress.



NEW ORLEANS
LOUISIANA

SET
ALCOHOL
LIMITS

**"I don't have to be the life of the party –
I do my performing on stage."**

MEET **GEOFF**

There's always a new band to see and more friends to meet, so local musician Geoff goes out most evenings, even when he's not working. But in making the rounds at clubs and parties, it's easy to end up drinking more than you intend. To avoid affecting his blood pressure, Geoff switches to iced tea after two drinks.

Watch your alcohol intake.
Why?

- Over time, heavy drinking can damage your heart and raise your blood pressure.
- Alcohol can keep your blood pressure medication from working well.
- Calories in alcohol can cause weight gain – another high blood pressure risk factor.



— Things to Consider About Alcohol —

Keep it to one drink a day for women,
two drinks a day for men.

One drink equals:

- A 12-ounce beer
- A 5-ounce glass of wine
- 1.5 ounces of 80-proof liquor

To your health!

- Nonalcoholic margaritas, mojitos, and even a hurricane punch: There are lots of festive drinks that won't impact your blood pressure. Check out the Mayo Clinic's Pinterest recipe board: www.pinterest.com/mayoclinic/healthy-recipes/
- If you're a heavy drinker, reduce alcohol intake slowly, over one to two weeks. If you stop suddenly, you risk developing severe high blood pressure for several days.



Start controlling high blood pressure by making lifestyle changes today.



FARGO
NORTH
DAKOTA



STOP



TOBACCO
USE

"I won't lie – quitting is tough. But it's worth it"

MEET **EARL**

Earl comes from a time and place when tobacco was a natural part of an outdoorsman's life. A "mini-stroke" and a hospital stay changed his views. To bring his blood pressure down, he'll have to kick the toughest addiction: Tobacco. He's pulling out all the stops against this one: going to group meetings at the hospital, calling the Quitline, and using prescriptions from his doctor.

**No, switching to chew isn't going to help.
It's all got to go.
Why?**

- Every cigarette, cigar, or chew raises your blood pressure – and keeps it high for up to an hour afterward.
- The chemicals in tobacco damage artery walls, making them narrower and causing your heart to work harder.
- Secondhand smoke can raise your friends' and family's blood pressure, too.



Quick Tips to Quit

If you haven't quit yet, remember not to smoke for at least 30 minutes before you take a blood pressure reading.

Get it done

- It's an easy number to remember: 1-800-QUITNOW. Quitlines throughout North America are ready with free help — and it's a free call.
- Try quitting with a buddy — make a bet, set daily or weekly phone calls with one another, and reach out when cravings strike.
- For more ideas, check Million Hearts®, a U.S. government program fighting heart disease and stroke that offers links to help you get tobacco out of your life.

High blood pressure increases your risk of stroke. So does tobacco use.
And stroke is one of the leading causes of death in America.





DETROIT MICHIGAN

**“With the help of my doctor, I take care of me
so I can take care of my family.”**

MEET **MARYAM**

Maryam always remembers her mother’s advice: “Take care of yourself first. Your family depends on you.” Since she was diagnosed with diabetes as a teen, she’s paid close attention to her diet, blood tests, and insulin shots. Now her high blood pressure gives her another health issue to manage – one that will change how she handles her diabetes care. She knows that with her health, just as with her family, what happens to one part affects the whole.

**High blood pressure can worsen other lifetime conditions
such as high cholesterol, diabetes, and kidney disease.
Why?**

- Lifelong conditions and problems that keep coming back, like diabetes, kidney disease and high cholesterol can all increase your risk for high blood pressure.
- High blood pressure puts a strain on all your organs.



— Take Care of Your Total Health —

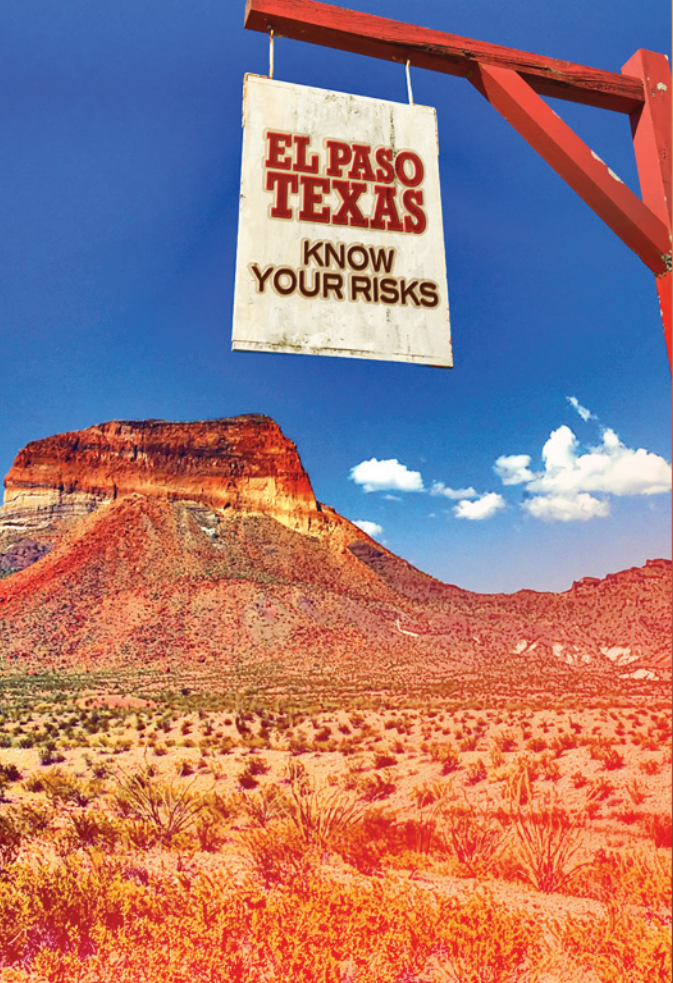
Since high blood pressure can lead to and worsen so many other diseases, we've partnered with national organizations that take the lead in heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, and more. Visit the following websites to learn about the connection between high blood pressure and:

- **HEART DISEASE**
(American Heart Association & WomenHeart)
- **KIDNEY DISEASE**
(American Kidney Fund)
- **STROKE**
(American Stroke Association)

Extra knowledge, extra care

- Blood pressure control is especially important if you have diabetes or kidney disease. You may benefit from treatments tailored for your condition.
- People with diabetes and high blood pressure are at increased risk for kidney disease. Ask your doctor how to stay ahead of this risk.
- American Kidney Fund's Kidney Health Tracker (available on the Measure Up/Pressure Down™ website) helps you track your blood pressure and other kidney-related tests, like urine protein and eGFR.

High blood pressure can lead to and worsen many other diseases.



“Our families tell the story of what could be – and what can change.”

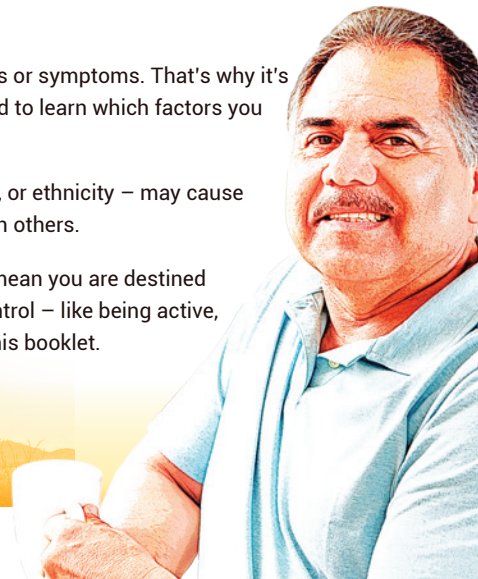
MEET **EMILIO**

From his grandfather, Emilio inherited his eyes, his sense of humor, and a farm – and a tendency for high blood pressure. Because he knew his family history, Emilio got tested regularly, so he was ready when he hit hypertensive levels. Now he’s making diet and exercise changes to get his numbers back to normal. Your age, race, and genes are all things you can’t control. But you can control high blood pressure.

Be informed about your risk factors.

Why?

- High blood pressure often shows no signs or symptoms. That’s why it’s important to know what your risks are and to learn which factors you can and can’t control.
- Some risk factors – like age, gender, race, or ethnicity – may cause you to be more at risk for the disease than others.
- Remember, having risk factors does not mean you are destined to have the disease. Some are in your control – like being active, eating healthy, and others discussed in this booklet.



Know Your Risks

Risk Factors You Can't Control

- **AGE**

The older you get, the greater your risk for high blood pressure.

- **GENDER**

Until age 45, more men than women get high blood pressure. After age 65, more women than men get it.

- **RACE AND ETHNICITY**

Certain races and ethnicities – like African-Americans and Puerto Rican-Americans – have higher rates of high blood pressure.

Risk Factors You Can Control

We hope the stories of Donna, Brett, and others taught you how to lower certain high blood pressure risk factors that you can control:

- **OVERWEIGHT AND OBESE**

(Eat Right with Donna, pages 4–5)

- **SALT AND SODIUM IN DIET**

(Eat Right with Donna, pages 4–5)

- **LACK OF POTASSIUM IN DIET**

(Eat Right with Donna, pages 4–5)

- **PHYSICAL INACTIVITY**

(Be Active with Brett, pages 6–7)

- **TOBACCO USE**

(Stop Tobacco Use with Earl, pages 18–19)

- **ALCOHOL**

(Set Alcohol Limits with Geoff, pages 16–17)

- **STRESS**

(Reduce Stress with Lisa, pages 14–15)

- **CERTAIN CHRONIC CONDITIONS**

(Manage All Your Health Issues with Maryam, pages 20–21)

Take control

- Calculate your risks with the high blood pressure health risk calculator from the American Heart Association. (It will also show you how to control what you can.)
- Get your family and friends on board: Take the Measure Up/Pressure Down™ High Blood Pressure Pledge online. It's a promise to stay healthy, stay aware, and help one another prevent high blood pressure.

Remember that on your journey to healthier living, you're not alone. Take care of yourself and your family.

The journey's not over — you've got a lifetime of good health ahead.

Learn more and share your tips through the Measure Up/Pressure Down™ website and social media channels.



**Measure Up
Pressure Down™**

MeasureUpPressureDown.com

Facebook.com/MeasureUpPressureDown

Twitter.com/MUPDcampaign

MEET YOUR TOUR GUIDES

The **Measure Up/Pressure Down™** campaign started when a large number of physicians and medical workers decided too many of their patients, friends, and families were being hurt by high blood pressure — and they had the tools to change that.

The **American Medical Group Foundation** guides the campaign and set the goal: 80 percent of high blood pressure patients will have their conditions under control by 2016.

The **American Medical Group Association** brings together health care professionals from 435 medical groups and health systems, caring for more than 120 million people nationwide. They have dedicated themselves to combating health conditions that affect Americans and improving national health.