

# High Blood Pressure Facts



**High blood pressure is serious because it can lead to major health problems. If you have high blood pressure, remember:**

- High blood pressure may not make you feel sick, but it is serious. See a doctor to treat it.
- You can lower your blood pressure by changing your day-to-day habits and by taking medicine, if needed.
- If you take high blood pressure medicine, making some lifestyle changes may help lower the dose you need.
- If you are already taking blood pressure medicine and your blood pressure is less than 120/80, that's good. It means medicine and lifestyles changes are working. If another doctor asks if you have high blood pressure, the answer is, "Yes, but it is being treated."
- Tell your doctor about all the drugs you take. Don't forget to mention over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and dietary supplements. They may affect your blood pressure. They also can change how well your blood pressure medicine works.
- Blood pressure pills should be taken at the same time each day. For example, take your medicine in the morning with breakfast or in the evening after brushing your teeth. If you miss a dose, do not double the dose the next day.
- Know what your blood pressure should be. Don't take more of your blood pressure medicine than your doctor prescribes. Very low blood pressure is not good, either.
- Do not stop taking your high blood pressure medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop. Do not skip a day or take half a pill. Remember to refill your medicine before you run out of pills.
- Taking your blood pressure at home:
  - ⦿ There are many blood pressure home monitors for sale. Ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist to see what monitor you need and show you how to use it
  - ⦿ Avoid smoking, exercise, and caffeine 30 minutes before taking your blood pressure.
  - ⦿ Make sure you are sitting with your feet on the floor and your back is against something.
  - ⦿ Relax quietly for 5 minutes before checking your blood pressure.
  - ⦿ Keep a list of your blood pressure numbers to share with your doctor, physician's assistant, or nurse. Take your home monitor to the doctor's office to make sure your monitor is working right.

From: <http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/hiblood.htm>

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