

Hypertension (high blood pressure)

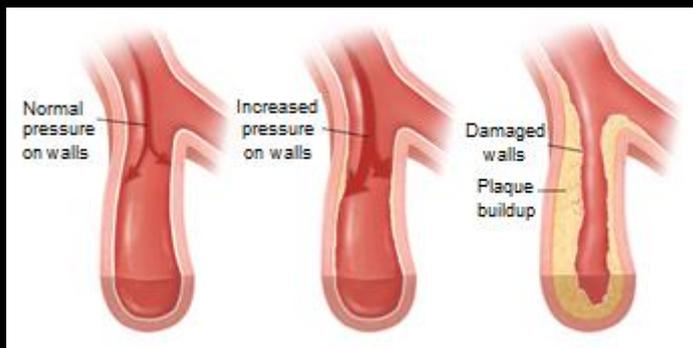


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Hypertension refers to elevated blood pressure (BP) due to increased force of blood in certain blood vessels (arteries). Blood is pumped away from the heart through arteries. Uncontrolled high BP leads to hardening of the arteries through a build-up of plaque. Hardened arteries increases the force needed for pumping blood, further increasing the BP.

Blood pressure measures the force pushing outwards on your arterial walls



- Normal blood pressure is below 120/80 mmHg
- Pressure between 120/80 and 139/89 mmHg are considered pre-hypertensive (i.e. on the way of developing hypertension)
- Pressures more than or equal to 140/90 mmHg are considered hypertensive

Symptoms:

- Symptoms are variable. Many individuals may have no symptoms at all
- Sometimes early morning headaches may be the only complaint. However untreated hypertension may cause: Headaches, sweating, dizzy spells, episodes of nose bleed and anxiety
- Long standing hypertension may lead to stroke and heart disease

“It is a serious medical condition; which may lead to complications which can affect multiple vital organs of the body, such as; heart, kidneys, eyes, and brain”.

Causes: Many patients have essential hypertension which implies an unknown cause. In some, lifestyle (see risk factors below) may be a contributing factor. Hormonal dysfunction may be the cause of some cases.

Risk Factors:

Non- Modifiable (cannot be changed/controlled)	Modifiable (can be controlled)
Genetics/family history	Cigarette smoking (smoking cessation)
Age	Sedentary lifestyle (inactivity)
	Obesity (exercise and diet control)
	Diabetes mellitus (by having good control on blood sugar levels)
	Dyslipidemia (controlling cholesterol (fat) in the body)

Reduce the risk of Hypertension:

1. Understand your risk of developing hypertension
2. Control your modifiable risk factors
3. Comply with follow-up physician visits and investigations; use medications if prescribed

Initial steps towards prevention:

- Exercise and be active at least 30-60 minutes 4 days in a week
- If overweight reduce weight by diet control and exercise
- Stop smoking
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Control and cope with stress situations
- Eat healthy and reduce salt intake
- Avoid illicit drug use and abuse

**For more information on hypertension and other diseases:
visit at www.educateyourhealth.com**