



## HYPERTENSION

### What is hypertension?

**Hypertension (HTN) or high blood pressure** is a chronic medical condition in which the systemic arterial blood pressure is elevated.

It is classified as either primary (essential) or secondary. About 90–95% of cases are termed "**primary hypertension**", **which refers to high blood pressure for which no medical cause can be found.**

The remaining 5–10% of cases (Secondary hypertension) are caused by other conditions that affect the kidneys, arteries, heart, or endocrine system.

High blood pressure does not mean excessive emotional tension, although emotional tension and stress can temporarily increase blood pressure. Normal blood pressure is below 120/80.

### DIAGNOSIS OF HYPERTENSION.

To determine whether you have hypertension, a medical professional will take a blood pressure reading. To prevent a false high reading, avoid caffeine, exercise, or smoking for at least 30 minutes and rest quietly for at least five minutes beforehand.

A diagnosis of hypertension is seldom based on a single reading, because blood pressure varies throughout the day. So your doctor will likely want to confirm high measurements on at least two occasions, usually within a few weeks of one another, and at different times.

## UNDERSTANDING THE NUMBERS:

The top number is your systolic pressure.

It is considered high if it is over 140 most of the time.

It is considered normal if it is below 120 most of the time.

The bottom number is your diastolic pressure.

It is considered high if it is over 90 most of the time.

It is considered normal if it is below 80 most of the time.

	<b>Systolic blood pressure</b>	<b>Diastolic blood pressure</b>	<b>Lifestyle changes</b>
<b>Normal</b>	<120	<80	encourage
<b>Pre hypertension</b>	120-139	80-89	YES
<b>Stage one</b>	140-159	90-99	YES
<b>Stage two</b>	>160	>100	YES

## SYMPTOMS OF HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION)

### **“The silent killer”**

One of the most dangerous aspects of hypertension is that you may not know that you have it. There are generally no symptoms of high blood pressure, so you usually don't feel it.

**In fact, nearly one-third of people who have hypertension don't know it. The only way to find out if you have high blood pressure is to get your blood pressure checked on a regular basis.** This is especially important if you have a close relative who has high blood pressure.

If your blood pressure is extremely high, there may be certain symptoms to look out for, including:

- Severe headache
- Fatigue or confusion
- Vision problems
- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Irregular heartbeat

- Blood in the urine
- Pounding in your chest, neck, or ears

If you have any of these symptoms, see a doctor immediately. You could be having a hypertensive crisis that could lead to a heart attack or stroke.

### **MAJOR RISK FACTORS:**

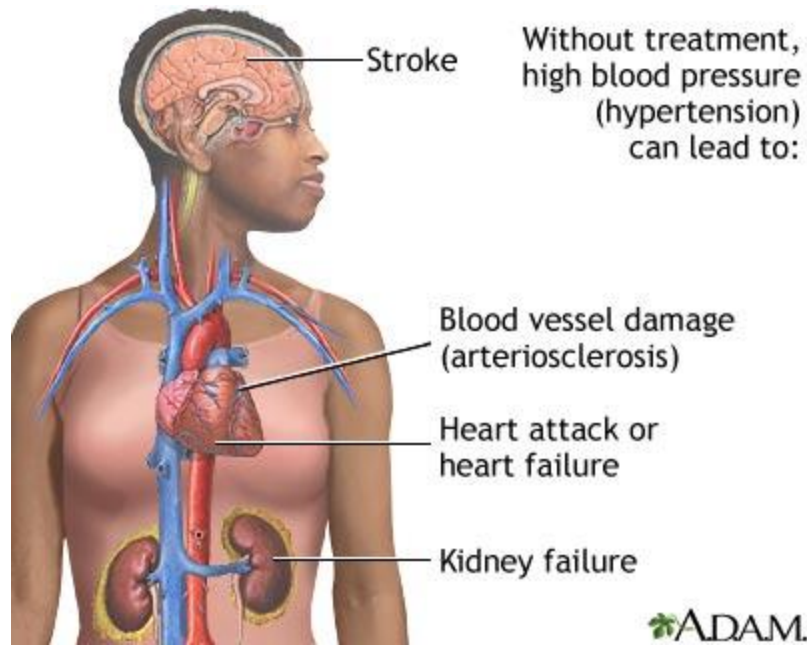
**The exact cause of hypertension is unknown but there are risk factors:**

#### Major

- Hypertension
- Smoking
- Obesity BMI >30
- Physical inactivity
- Dyslipidemia-high cholesterols
- Diabetes Mellitus
- Microalbuminuria
- Age male>55 female>65
- Family history of Cardiac disease.

**Untreated hypertension can lead to damage of:**

- Heart
- Brain
- Kidney
- Peripheral artery disease
- Retinopathy (eyes)



## **MANAGEMENT OF HYPERTENSION**

Hypertension a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, stroke and heart attack and as such is one of the most important preventable causes of premature morbidity and mortality in developed and developing countries.

### **1. Medical management with antihypertensive drugs for bps consistently over 140/90:**

Psychological acceptance that this is a chronic disease that often requires lifelong medication is important, as compliance to the medical regime is indispensable in controlling the high blood pressure.

Sometimes more than 1 drug may be prescribed, depending on the severity of the BP and any other condition-if any like Diabetes, Cholesterol and others.

### **2. Lifestyle modification: for bps (130-139/85-89 mm/hg)**

- Patients should stop smoking, if necessary Nicotine replacement therapy.
- Weight reduction should be suggested if necessary, to maintain ideal BMI of below 30.

### **3. Dash diet-dietary approaches to stop hypertension.**

- Reduce the salt, total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol intake, while increasing consumption of polyunsaturated, monosaturated fats and oily fish. Encourage fruit, vegetables, legumes and whole grains; and low fat (or zero-fat) dairy, poultry meat, fish and shellfish products (as in the DASH eating plan).
- Cut alcohol intake.
- Encourage **regular dynamic (cardio) exercise** tailored to age and capabilities of patient. This may mean three vigorous training sessions per week for a young adult, or brisk walking for  $\geq 30$  minutes most days for the older individuals.
- Relaxation: holidays, rest etc
- As well as the targets above, strive for a happy, well-informed patient. Patient participation and acceptance is key in disease management.

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