



# Know Your Numbers

## *What are they and why should you care?*

### Be In The Know!

Don't let these common barriers stop you from finding out vital information:

- lack of time
- fear of the unknown
- lack of knowledge around health topics

Visit [iLiveLifeWell.com](http://iLiveLifeWell.com) to learn more ways to be in the know about your health.

It's important to know your health numbers to have a snapshot of your health and actively take steps to reduce your chance of a serious illness. Get your numbers checked every year, at your doctor or convenient care clinic, so you know where you're at and where you want to be.

### *Which numbers are important to know?*

- Blood pressure
- Total cholesterol
- Glucose level
- Waist circumference

**Blood pressure** measures the force applied to the walls of the arteries as the heart pumps blood through your body. A blood pressure reading higher than 140/90 can increase your risk of heart attack or stroke, however, it can be controlled.

#### What you can do to lower your blood pressure

- Read food labels to be aware of how much sodium is actually in your food. Limit your intake to less than 1,500 mg if you currently have high blood pressure.
- Taste your food before adding additional salt.
- Move more than you did yesterday. Add a few minutes to your daily walk, a 10-minute bike ride after dinner or increase your intensity by adding intervals.
- If you smoke, smoke less than you did yesterday. The nicotine and tobacco can increase your blood pressure.

**Blood glucose** is the measure of sugar in your blood. A fasting blood glucose level higher than 126 mg/dL, and a non-fasting level higher than 200 mg/dL, can put you at risk for diabetes.

#### What you can do to lower your blood sugar

- Move more than you did yesterday. Add a 10-minute walk around your building and invite a friend!
- Eat foods with low glycemic levels like high fiber fruits, oatmeal, peanuts, beans, peas and granola.
- Avoid fast food and processed foods that contain high levels of simple sugars, trans-fat and saturated fat.
- Keep a food journal. Check out the food journal template on [iLiveLifeWell.com](http://iLiveLifeWell.com) under 'Resources'.

**Total cholesterol** is a measure of both "good" (HDL) and "bad" (LDL) cholesterol in your blood. Cholesterol levels above 200 mg/dL can increase your risk of heart attack and stroke.

#### What you can do to lower your cholesterol

- Get moving! Incorporate exercise into your day. Walk around the block after dinner or enjoy a bike ride through the neighborhood. Any additional movement you do will help.
- Choose foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol. Try oatmeal with walnuts or almonds and a dusting of cinnamon; add fish and other omega-3 fatty acids to your diet; and use olive oil as a dressing instead of the creamy alternatives.

**Waist circumference** is the measurement of your waist at your belly button. A measurement over 37 inches for men and 31 inches for woman can be a precursor to type II diabetes, breathing problems or certain cancers due to excess adipose (fat) tissue around the abdominal cavity.

#### What you can do to lose weight

- Drink more water. Keep a 16 oz. water bottle next to you and fill it up at least 4 times a day.
- Eat a good breakfast. It will jump-start your metabolism and give you more energy.
- Go for a walk. Don't think of exercise as a punishment. Get out and enjoy the fresh air!