



Control the Pressure!

Steps to Managing Your Blood Pressure

LiveLifeWell

High blood pressure is often called the “silent killer” – there are generally no symptoms, so you usually don’t feel it. In fact, many people have high blood pressure for years without knowing it. The only way to find out if you have high blood pressure is to get your blood pressure checked regularly. This is especially important if you know others in your family have high blood pressure. LiveLifeWell by understanding and taking control of your blood pressure.

Get your blood pressure checked regularly

A blood pressure screening is one of the easiest tests you’ll ever take...and it’s also one of the most important. It can determine if you have high blood pressure – or hypertension – which means your heart has to work harder than it should to pump blood to your body. **This greatly increases your risk for stroke, heart attack and other life threatening conditions.**

Blood pressure is recorded as two numbers. Systolic pressure (the higher number) is the pressure while the heart is beating. Diastolic pressure is the pressure when the heart is resting between beats. Normal blood pressure is below 120/80 mm HG. Blood pressure between 120/80 mm HG and 139/89 mm HG is considered “prehypertension.” High blood pressure is at or above 140/90 mm HG.

Learn your risk factors

The exact causes of high blood pressure are not known. However, you may have risk factors that could play a role in its development, including:

- Smoking
- Being overweight or obese
- Lack of physical activity
- Stress
- Older age
- Genetics
- Too much salt in your diet
- Too much alcohol consumption (more than 1 to 2 drinks per day)
- Family history of high blood pressure
- Chronic kidney disease
- Adrenal and thyroid disorders

Let Abbott resources help.

Abbott offers many *free* resources to help you reach or maintain a healthy blood pressure level. Check out iLiveLifeWell.com for information.

Know what you can change

If you have any of the risk factors listed above, or have a blood pressure reading greater than 120/80, a critical step in preventing and treating high blood pressure is a healthy lifestyle, including:

- Losing weight (if you are overweight or obese).
- Eating a healthy diet (eating more fruits, vegetables, and low fat dairy products, less saturated and total fat).
- Reducing the amount of sodium in your diet to 2,300 milligrams (about 1 teaspoon of salt) a day or less.
- Quitting smoking.
- Getting regular aerobic exercise (such as brisk walking at least 30 minutes a day, several days a week).
- Limiting alcohol to two drinks a day for men, one drink a day for women.

There also may be medications to help you control or lower your blood pressure. Talk to your doctor about the treatment options that are right for you.