

## Take Steps— Prevent High Blood Pressure!



**High blood pressure is called the silent killer. It is a disease that has no warning signs.**

### Why is high blood pressure dangerous?

High blood pressure is a serious disease. When your blood pressure is high, your heart has to work harder than it should to move blood to all parts of the body. If not treated, high blood pressure raises your chances of:

- stroke
- heart attack
- kidney problems
- eye problems
- death

### A healthy heart is in your own hands...

**1. Get your blood pressure measured.** Your doctor will tell you if your blood pressure is high.

**A desirable blood pressure is less than 120/80.** Even if your blood pressure is in the desirable range, have it checked at least once a year.

**2. Take control!** Follow the steps given to lower your blood pressure if it is high.

**Take steps to stay healthy now, so you won't have high blood pressure later.**

**To prevent high blood pressure:**

- **Aim for a healthy weight.** Try not to gain extra weight. Lose weight if you are overweight. Try losing weight slowly, about half a pound to 1 pound each week until you reach a healthy weight.

- **Be active every day.** You can walk, dance, use the stairs, play sports, or do any activity you enjoy.
- **Use less salt and sodium in cooking.** Buy foods marked “sodium free,” “low sodium,” or “reduced sodium.” Take the salt shaker off the table.
- **Cut back on alcohol.** Men who drink should have no more than one or two drinks each day. Women who drink should have no more than one drink a day. Pregnant women should not drink any alcohol.



**If you have high blood pressure, don't give up. Take steps and you may be able to control or lower your high blood pressure. To lower your high blood pressure:**

**1. Practice these steps:**

- maintain a healthy weight.
- be active every day.
- eat fewer foods high in salt and sodium.
- cut back on alcoholic beverages.

**2. Take your medicine the way your doctor tells you.**

**3. Have your blood pressure checked often.**

**Check your blood pressure! An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.**

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