

# Hypertension - High Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the force of blood against your artery walls as it circulates through your body. Blood pressure normally rises and falls throughout the day. But it can cause health problems if it stays high for a long time. High blood pressure can lead to heart disease and stroke. These are the leading causes of death in the U.S.

## Risk Factors for High Blood Pressure

Having certain medical conditions can raise your chances of getting high blood pressure. These conditions are:

- Prehypertension.
- Diabetes.

Unhealthy behaviors can also raise your risk for high blood pressure, especially for people who have one of the medical conditions listed above. Unhealthy behaviors are:

- Smoking tobacco.
- Eating foods high in sodium and low in potassium.
- Not getting enough physical activity.
- Being obese.
- Drinking too much alcohol.



## What are the signs and symptoms?

High blood pressure usually has no warning signs or symptoms. As a result, many people don't realize they have it. That's why it's important to visit your doctor regularly. Be sure to talk with your doctor about having your blood pressure checked.

## How is it treated?

If you have high blood pressure, your doctor may prescribe meds to treat it. Lifestyle changes, such as the ones listed above, can be just as important as taking meds. Talk with your doctor about the best ways to reduce your risk for high blood pressure