

High Blood Pressure and Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)

How does high blood pressure affect my arteries?

High blood pressure increases your risk of having PAD. Over time, high blood pressure damages the wall of the arteries. As a result, the arteries become thick, hard, narrow and rough inside, making it harder for the blood to flow.

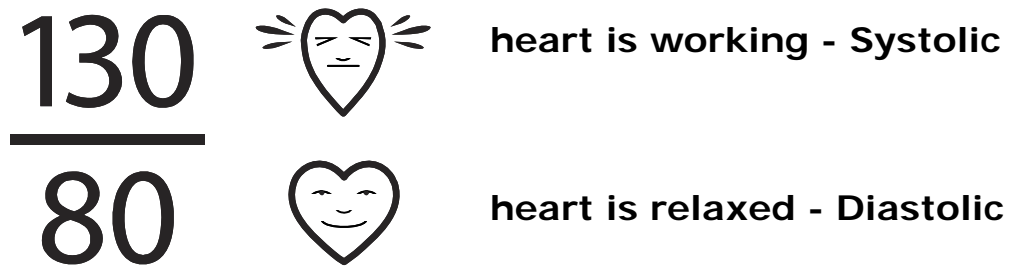
High blood pressure also increases your risk for having a heart attack, stroke, eye problems and kidney disease.

What is blood pressure?

Your blood moves all around your body in arteries. Blood pressure is the force of the blood on the walls of your arteries.

Blood pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury (mm Hg) and recorded as 2 numbers:

1. Systolic blood pressure is the 1st or top number. This is blood pressure when your heart is working (contracting).
2. Diastolic blood pressure is the 2nd or lower number. This is blood pressure when your heart is relaxed.



What should your blood pressure be?

Most adults	Less than $\frac{140}{90}$ mm Hg
Adults with PAD, diabetes or kidney disease	Less than $\frac{130}{80}$ mm Hg

These are general guidelines. Ask your doctor for your blood pressure target.

How will controlling my blood pressure help me?

Controlling your blood pressure will lower your chances of having PAD, a heart attack, heart failure, stroke or dying.

Many things can affect your blood pressure, including the foods you eat, your intake of salt or sodium, your weight, your level of physical activity, your alcohol intake, whether or not you smoke, and how you handle stress. For more information about how lifestyle changes can affect your blood pressure, ask for a copy of the handout, "Blood Pressure and Your Health".

Talk to your doctor about your blood pressure.

Blood pressure medications

There are many types of medications to help control your blood pressure. Many people take more than one medication for their blood pressure. Your doctor will work with you to find the one(s) that are right for you.

Tips for taking your blood pressure medication:

- Take your medication as told to you by your doctor even if your blood pressure returns to normal.
- Do not stop taking your medication without talking to your doctor.
- If you are feeling unwell after starting your medication, talk to your doctor right away. You should not feel differently after taking the medication.

My blood pressure while I was in the hospital was: _____

My blood pressure medications are: _____

Nurse's notes:

Questions for my family doctor:

Helpful websites:

- Peripheral Arterial Disease Coalition www.padcoalition.org
- Vascular Disease Foundation www.vdf.org
- Hypertension Society of Canada www.hypertension.ca
- Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada www.heartandstroke.ca
- Dial-a-dietitian www.dialadietitian.org