

# October Wellness Action Message

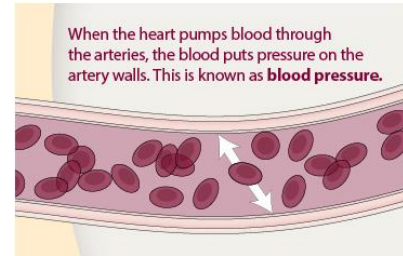
Quarterly Theme: Managing Chronic Conditions  
Monthly Theme: Managing High Blood Pressure



## What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the pressure of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. Arteries carry blood from your heart to other parts of your body.

Your blood pressure normally rises and falls throughout the day.



## What do blood pressure numbers mean?

Blood pressure is measured using two numbers:

- The first number, called *systolic* blood pressure, measures the pressure in your arteries when your heart beats.
- The second number, called *diastolic* blood pressure, measures the pressure in your arteries when your heart rests between beats.

If the measurement reads 120 systolic and 80 diastolic, you would say “120 over 80” or write “120/80 mmHg.”

## Healthy and unhealthy blood pressure ranges – American Heart Association

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)	and/or	DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
<b>HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)</b>	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

## **What are the signs and symptoms of high blood pressure?**

High blood pressure usually has no warning signs or symptoms, and many people do not know they have it. *Measuring your blood pressure is the only way to know whether you have high blood pressure.*

High blood pressure usually develops over time. It can happen because of unhealthy lifestyle choices, such as not getting enough regular physical activity. Certain health conditions, such as diabetes and having obesity, can also increase the risk for developing high blood pressure. High blood pressure can also happen during pregnancy.

High blood pressure is called the “silent killer” because it usually has no warning signs or symptoms, and many people do not know they have it.

## **How do I know if I have high blood pressure?**

There’s only one way to know if you have high blood pressure: Have a doctor or other health professional measure it. Measuring your blood pressure is quick and painless.

## **What can I do to prevent or manage high blood pressure?**

Many people with high blood pressure can lower their blood pressure into a healthy range or keep their numbers in a healthy range by making lifestyle changes. Talk with your health care team about:

- Getting at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week (about 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week)
- Not smoking
- Eating a healthy diet, including limiting sodium (salt) and alcohol
- Keeping a healthy weight
- Managing stress

In addition to making positive lifestyle changes, some people with high blood pressure need to **take medicine** to manage their blood pressure.

Talk with your health care team right away if you think you have high blood pressure or if you’ve been told you have high blood pressure but do not have it under control.

By taking action to lower your blood pressure, you can help protect yourself against heart disease and stroke, also sometimes called cardiovascular disease (CVD)

## Medica's resources

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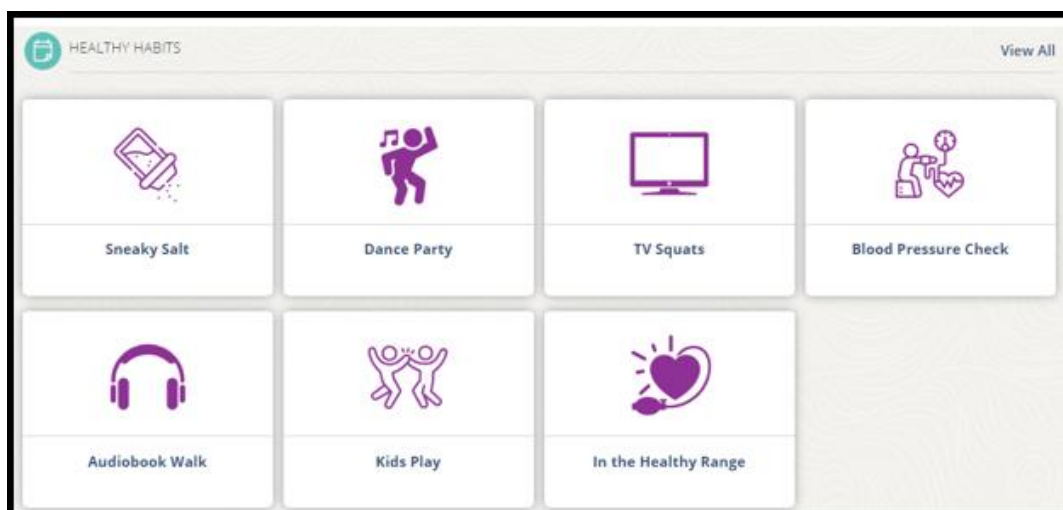
- **Looking to find a health care provider: Getting Started**

- Go to Medica.com/Find-care
- Select your plan
- See the Providers and Facilities section and click on See your choices

NOTE: You receive the highest level of benefits when you see providers in your plan's network.

- **My Health Rewards – Healthy Habit Blood Pressure Resources**

- Click on Home
- Click on Healthy Habits
- Under Health Situations, click on Blood Pressure



- **My Health Rewards – Journeys related Blood Pressure Resources**

- Click on Health
- Click on Journeys
- Click on Health Situations
- Scroll down to Blood Pressure – click on the specific Journey you are interested in

