

Chronic Disease

Risk Factor Review



Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. Blood pressure rises and falls with each heartbeat.

Systolic pressure, the top number, represents the pressure in the arteries as the heart contracts and sends blood into circulation. Diastolic pressure, the bottom number, occurs as the heart relaxes following a beat, and represents the lowest pressure to which the arteries are exposed between heartbeats.

Treatment of high blood pressure involves weight loss with an appropriate diet while incorporating regular exercise into your daily routine. Eliminating your use of tobacco products and reducing alcohol intake is also very beneficial.

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mm Hg (top number)	Diastolic mm Hg (bottom number)
Normal	Less than 120	Less than 80
Prehypertension	120 - 139	80 - 89
Hypertension Stage 1	140 - 159	90 - 99
Hypertension Stage 2	160 or higher	100 or higher
Severe Hypertension (contact your doctor immediately)	180 or higher	110 or higher

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Body Mass Index (BMI)

Body Mass Index (BMI) is the number that shows body weight adjusted for height. Each person, based on his or her BMI number, falls into one of four categories; underweight, normal, overweight, or obese.

A higher body mass index number indicates a greater risk for developing chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease. The best way to achieve a healthy BMI is to increase your daily amount of physical activity and to choose foods rich in nutrients, like fruits and vegetables. This will help you lose weight, which in turn will lower your BMI and your risk of developing chronic diseases.

Classification	BMI (kg/m ²)
Underweight	< 18.5
Normal	18.5 - 24.9
Overweight	25.0 - 29.9
Obesity Class I	30.0 - 34.9
Obesity Class II	35.0 - 39.9
Extreme Obesity Class III	> 40.0

Waist Circumference

Another method for assessing your weight status and estimating your risk of chronic disease is to measure your waist circumference. Excessive abdominal fat places you at greater risk for developing obesity-related conditions, such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and coronary artery disease.

Waist circumference is measured in inches. This measurement may be used as a screening tool, but is not diagnostic of the body fatness or the overall health of an individual.

Gender	Waist Circumference
Men	More than 40 in.
Women	More than 35 in.

Triglycerides

Triglycerides are a form of fat carried through the bloodstream. Most of your body's fat is in the form of triglycerides which are stored in fat tissue. Calories consumed during a meal and not used immediately by tissues are converted to triglycerides and transported to fat cells to be stored. High levels of triglycerides are generally associated with a higher risk of heart disease and stroke.

Causes of high triglycerides include overweight and obesity, physical inactivity, cigarette smoking, excess alcohol consumption and a diet very high in carbohydrates (more than 60 percent of total calories). These causes can be addressed with lifestyle changes. Alcohol intake and pancreatic diseases can also raise triglyceride levels.

Normal levels should be less than 150 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL).

Total Cholesterol, HDL, and LDL

High blood cholesterol is one of the major risk factors for heart disease and stroke. Heart disease is the number one killer of both men and women in the United States.

High Density Lipoproteins (HDL) or 'good cholesterol' helps protect your body against heart disease by taking the bad cholesterol out of your blood and keeping it from building up in your arteries. HDL levels 60 mg/dL and higher provide protection to your body against heart disease. Low Density Lipoproteins (LDL) or 'bad cholesterol' can build up on the walls of your arteries and increase your chances of getting heart disease.

Age, gender, and heredity are factors that influence your cholesterol which you cannot control. However, weight is a risk factor which you CAN control! Being overweight or obese can raise your cholesterol levels. A heart healthy diet high in unsaturated fats (fats from plant sources) and low in saturated fats (fats from animal sources) and increasing your physical activity to at least 30 minutes, 5 days per week can help you lose weight, lower your 'bad cholesterol,' and raise your 'good cholesterol.'

Type	Recommended Range
Total Cholesterol	< 200 mg/dL
HDL Cholesterol	Men: greater than or equal to 40 mg/dL Women: greater than or equal to 50 mg/dL
LDL Cholesterol	< 130 mg/dL If no other risk factors are present* < 100 mg/dL If other risk factors are present*

*Risk Factors: Coronary Artery Disease, Carotid Artery Disease, Diabetes, Peripheral Artery Disease, Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm, etc.

Blood Glucose & Hemoglobin A1c

Glucose is a form of sugar which is found in foods containing carbohydrates. It is our body's main and preferred source of energy. Glucose levels in the blood increase slightly after you eat. In order to get a true blood glucose reading, a 'fasting' specimen should be taken. Two common conditions associated with blood glucose are hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) and hyperglycemia (high blood sugar). Elevated blood glucose levels may indicate prediabetes or diabetes. Regular physical activity and a healthy diet can help improve and maintain normal blood glucose levels.

Hemoglobin A1c is a common test used to diagnose diabetes and prediabetes. The results of this test reflect a two to three month average of your blood glucose levels. The higher your A1c level, the poorer your glucose control, and the more likely you are to have a diagnosis of diabetes. Or if you already have diabetes, the more likely you are to have diabetes complications.

Blood Glucose Category	Hemoglobin A1c %	Fasting (mg/dL)	2 Hours Post-Prandial (mg/dL)
Normal	Less than 5.7%	Less than 100	Less than 140
Prediabetes	5.7% to 6.4%	100 - 125	n/a
Diabetes	6.5% or higher	126 or higher	Less than 180

Schedule Your Appointment Today!

Discuss your numbers with a Healthstat clinician or health coach. Call our toll-free scheduling line: 1-866-959-9355



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