



MANAGING YOUR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

If you are diagnosed with high blood pressure, there are things you can do to reduce your risks, even without medication. Lifestyle changes—including the simple act of monitoring your own blood pressure on a regular basis—can play an important role in managing your high blood pressure.

The Y can help.

The YMCA's **Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program** is an evidence-based program that features personalized support as you develop the habit of monitoring your blood pressure. Research shows that checking and recording your blood pressure at least twice a month over a period of four months may lower blood pressure in many people with high blood pressure.

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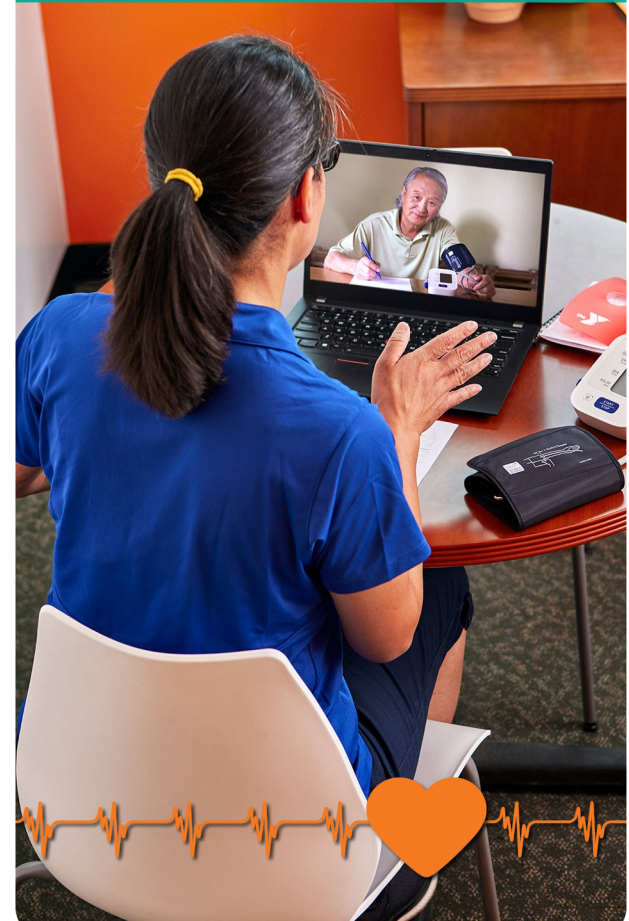
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TAKE ACTION TO IMPROVE HEART HEALTH

Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program
ONEONTA FAMILY YMCA



DID YOU KNOW

- Nearly half of adults in the US has high blood pressure – more than 116 million people?
- Only about half of people with high blood pressure know they have it?
- Only about 1 in 4 adults with high blood pressure have their condition under control?

Blood pressure is the force of blood pumping against your arteries. High blood pressure, often called hypertension, occurs when the force of this pressure is damaging to the arteries. You could say the damage is done quietly, as most of the time high blood pressure has no obvious symptoms.¹

There are plenty of reasons to check your blood pressure:

- About 7 of every 10 people having their first heart attack have high blood pressure.²
- About 8 of every 10 people having their first stroke have high blood pressure.²
- High blood pressure is the most common non-cardiac cause of heart failure.³



WHAT YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW...

Let's clear up some common misconceptions about high blood pressure:

1. "I don't feel like I have high blood pressure."

Because of its lack of obvious symptoms, high blood pressure is often called "the silent killer." Get your blood pressure checked regularly. High blood pressure can only be diagnosed by a health care provider.

2. "I'm too young to have high blood pressure."

Anyone can develop hypertension, even kids. Sometimes other factors, such as obesity, a sedentary lifestyle or a family history of high blood pressure, can contribute to hypertension in younger patients. Have your children's blood pressure checked regularly, starting around age 3.

3. "I'm not at risk for developing high blood pressure."

Because of genetic, cultural, and lifestyle factors, certain groups are more at risk for hypertension particularly Asian Americans, African Americans, and Hispanic people. Cultural influences in diet and attitudes towards clinical care (in lieu of a physician), or limited access to health care services can be factors that prevent some groups from getting their blood pressure checked on a regular basis.

The American Heart Association recommends that if you are 20 years old or older with blood pressure in the normal range (less than 120/80 mm Hg), you should have your blood pressure checked at least once every two years.

4. "I have a family history of high blood pressure, so there is nothing I can do to prevent it".

It's true that if high blood pressure runs in your family, you're more likely to develop it yourself. That doesn't mean there's nothing you can do to fight it. The good news is that eating a healthy diet, increasing your physical activity and monitoring your blood pressure can lower your risk for developing hypertension, even if it runs in your family.

¹ "What is High Blood Pressure?" American Heart Association, 31 Oct. 2016, <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/the-facts-about-high-blood-pressure/what-is-high-blood-pressure>. Accessed 10 Aug. 2022

² "Heart Disease and Stroke" Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 23 May 2022, [cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/heart-disease-stroke.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/heart-disease-stroke.htm). Accessed 1 July 2022

³ "How High Blood Pressure Can Lead to Heart Failure" American Heart Association, 4 Mar. 2022, [heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/health-threats-from-high-blood-pressure/how-high-blood-pressure-can-lead-to-heart-failure](https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/health-threats-from-high-blood-pressure/how-high-blood-pressure-can-lead-to-heart-failure). Accessed 1 July 2022