

Health tip: Know your health numbers

Tips to help you stay on top of your health

One of the first steps to improving your health is knowing your important health numbers. These numbers include knowing your body mass index, blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose numbers.



BMI¹

- Healthy Weight: 18.5 to 24.9
- Overweight: 25 to 29.9
- Obese: 30 or higher



Blood Pressure²

- Normal: Systolic less than 120 and diastolic less than 80
- Elevated: Systolic between 120 and 129 and diastolic more than 80
- Stage 1 Hypertension: Systolic between 130 and 139 or diastolic between 80 and 89
- Stage 2 Hypertension: Systolic 140 or higher or diastolic 90 or higher
- Hypertensive Crisis: Systolic higher than 180 and/or diastolic higher than 120



Cholesterol³

- Total Cholesterol: Less than 200 mg/dL
- HDL Cholesterol for Men: Higher than 40 mg/dL
- HDL Cholesterol for Women: Higher than 50 mg/dL
- LDL Cholesterol: Less than 100mg/dL



Glucose⁴

- Optimal Fasting Level: less than 100 mg/dL

Consider a more heart-healthy diet⁵

Eating heart-healthy means your diet should include plenty of these food choices:

- Vegetables from all subgroups – dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starches
- Fruits, especially whole fruits to get all the nutrients (such as fiber)
- Grains, at least half of which are high fiber whole grains. Aim for 25-30 grams of fiber per day. Look for whole-grain cereal, breads, crackers, oatmeal, noodles and brown rice
- Fat-free or low-fat dairy, including milk, yogurt, cheese, and/or fortified soy beverages
- A variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), nuts, and seeds

Limit your intake of these foods⁵

- Saturated and trans fats as these may raise your cholesterol
- Sodium which may increase blood pressure
- Red meat and compare food labels to select the leanest cuts available
- Sweets and sugar sweetened beverages

Practice habits that may help keep your heart healthier⁵

- Exercise regularly
- Eat a heart-healthy diet
- Maintain a healthier weight
- Manage your blood pressure
- Take charge of your cholesterol
- Keep blood sugar at healthy levels
- Don't smoke
- Drink alcohol in moderation

Consider 30 minutes of moderate physical activity⁶

Finding time for 30 minutes of moderate exercise on most days of the week may provide many of the same benefits as strenuous exercise. Physical activity is anything that gets the body moving, including walking, gardening, raking leaves, and bicycling.

Tips to manage your stress⁷

- Slow down and plan ahead
- Sleep 7 or more hours each night
- Let worry go and take 15-20 minutes each day to sit quietly and relax
- Stay connected with family and friends
- Volunteer or spend time helping others
- Lean into things you can change



Sources:

¹ CDC. [cdc.gov/bmi/faq](https://www.cdc.gov/bmi/faq). 2024. Accessed November 2024.

² AHA. [heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/understanding-blood-pressure-readings](https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/understanding-blood-pressure-readings). 2024. Accessed November 2024.

³ CDC. [cdc.gov/cholesterol/about/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol/about/index.html). 2024. Accessed November 2024.

⁴ CDC. [cdc.gov/diabetes/diabetes-testing/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/diabetes-testing/index.html). 2024. Accessed November 2024.

⁵ AHA. [heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/changes-you-can-make-to-manage-high-blood-pressure/managing-blood-pressure-with-a-heart-healthy-diet](https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/changes-you-can-make-to-manage-high-blood-pressure/managing-blood-pressure-with-a-heart-healthy-diet). 2024. Accessed November 2024.

⁶ AHA. [heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/aha-recs-for-physical-activity-in-adults](https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/aha-recs-for-physical-activity-in-adults). 2024. Accessed November 2024.

⁷ AHA. [heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/stress-less-with-healthy-habits-infographic](https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/stress-less-with-healthy-habits-infographic). 2024. Accessed November 2024.

This information is for general informational purposes only and is not intended nor should be construed as medical advice. Individuals should consult an appropriate medical professional to determine what may be right for them.