

## MORE PREVENTION & CONTROL

**Moderate Alcohol Use** – Excessive alcohol consumption is related to increased blood pressure. People who drink alcohol should do so in moderation. “Moderate drinking” is an average of 1 drink or less per day for women and an average of two drinks or less per day for men.

**No Tobacco** – Smoking injures blood vessels and speeds up the process of hardening of the arteries. Smoking is a major risk for heart disease and stroke. If you don’t smoke, don’t start. Quitting smoking lowers the risk of heart attack and stroke. Your doctor can suggest programs to help you quit smoking.

**Medications** – If you develop high blood pressure, your doctor may prescribe medications, in addition to lifestyle changes, to help bring it under control. Once your blood pressure is controlled continuing your medication and doctor visits is critical to keep your blood pressure in check. The lifestyle changes are just as important as taking your medicines as prescribed.

## HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE & THE HRP

When a person has uncontrolled, very high blood pressure, it greatly increases the risk of heart attack or stroke. This person may be removed from the HRP, due to safety concerns, until the blood pressure is under control.

### References:

National Institute of Health:  
[http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/hbp\\_low/](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/hbp_low/)

Mayo Clinic:  
<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/high-blood-pressure/DS00100>

WEBMD:<http://www.webmd.com/hypertension-high-blood-pressure/default.htm>

Healthline:  
<http://www.healthline.com/adamcontent/hypertension>

“Dietary Guidelines for Americans,” (2005):  
<http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/>

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)

- High Blood Pressure:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/index.htm>
- Nutrition and Physical Activity Program:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/index.htm>

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## CONTACTS!

Pantex Occupational Medicine  
P. O. Box 30020 MS 12-2  
Amarillo, TX 79120-0020  
Phone: 806-477-3033 Fax: 806-477-6786  
Emergencies - ALL SHIFTS: 806-477-3333

Off Shift:

**Emergencies** – 806-477-3333  
**Operations Center** – 806-477-5000  
**Fire Department Shift Officer** – 806-477-4454

## PANTEX OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE

*Healthcare Assessment, Wellness Programs  
& Case Management*

# High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)





High blood pressure or “hypertension” is called the ‘silent killer’ because it usually has no warning signs or symptoms until other serious problems arise. Many people do not know that they have it. Anyone, including children, can develop high blood pressure; but it is easily detected and usually can be controlled. It is important for you to know your blood pressure level and to check it regularly.

## HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE FACTS

- It is the leading cause of doctor office visits in the United States.
- Approximately 30% of the U.S. adult population has high blood pressure.
- Anyone, including children, can develop high blood pressure.
- High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease, stroke, heart failure, and kidney disease.
- The prevalence of high blood pressure is much higher in African Americans than other racial and ethnic groups.
- The risk of cardiovascular disease beginning at 115/75 mmHg doubles with each increase of 20/10 mmHg.
- People with normal pressure at age 55 have a 90% risk for developing hypertension in their remaining lifetime.

## WHAT IS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?

Blood pressure is the force of blood against the artery walls. It is often written or stated as two numbers.

“Systolic” is the first/top number, representing the pressure when the heart contracts.

“Diastolic” is the second/bottom number, representing the pressure when the heart rests between beats.

Blood pressure rises and falls during the day.

When it consistently stays too high for too long, it is called “hypertension.” Doctors use the following levels for defining adult blood pressure values:

- Normal blood pressure is a systolic blood pressure of less than 120 mmHg and a diastolic blood pressure of less than 80 mmHg.
- “Pre-hypertension” is a systolic blood pressure of 120–139 mmHg or a diastolic blood pressure of 80–89 mmHg. People with pre-hypertension are at increased risk to progress to hypertension. Occasional short-term treatment of pre-hypertension will reduce progression to hypertension.
- “Hypertension” for adults is systolic blood pressure of 140 mmHg or higher or diastolic blood pressure of 90 mmHg or higher.

## TYPES OF HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

**Essential hypertension** – this includes most cases and does not have a specific cause.

**Secondary hypertension** – when an underlying condition such as kidney disorders, congenital abnormalities, or other conditions causes high blood pressure.

**Pregnancy-related hypertension** – existing high blood pressure can predispose some women to develop blood pressure problems when they become pregnant.

## MONITORING PRESSURE

Monitor your blood pressure.

**If your blood pressure is 140/90 or above, see your doctor!**

Multiple elevated readings over time may mean you need medications. To assist you and your doctor, Plant Medical can provide a “wallet card” record and walk-in blood pressure checks. Ask any of our nurses about it while in the clinic.

## PREVENTION & CONTROL

High blood pressure is treated with lifestyle modifications and, if needed, medications. Lifestyle factors to treat high blood pressure include weight control, exercise, healthy diet, limiting alcohol use, and other lifestyle modifications. Several types of medications are used to treat high blood pressure. Discuss the best ways to address your high blood pressure with your healthcare provider.

**Genetic Factors** – Genes can play a role in high blood pressure. It is also possible that an increased risk of high blood pressure within a family is due to a common sedentary lifestyle or poor eating habits.

**Prevent and Control Diabetes** – People with diabetes have a higher risk of high blood pressure, but they can also work to reduce their risk. Recent studies suggest that everyone can take steps to reduce their risk of diabetes.

**Maintain a Healthy Diet** – After medication and maintaining ideal weight, the next most effective intervention for blood pressure is through diet, including eating lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, and low-fat dairy products. Lower or cut out salt or sodium and work on lowering dietary saturated fat and cholesterol.

**Maintain a Healthy Weight** – Being overweight or obese can raise your blood pressure, and losing weight can help you lower your blood pressure.

**Be Active** – Physical activity can help to lower blood pressure. The Surgeon General recommends that adults should engage in moderate physical activities for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week