

CONTROLLING HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

- Over 30 % of Alabama citizens have high blood pressure. High blood pressure, also called hypertension, increases the risk for heart disease and stroke, the leading cause of death in Alabama. Because the consequences of uncontrolled high blood pressure are so serious, early detection, treatment and control is very important.
- High blood pressure is often called “the silent killer” because it has no symptoms. Untreated high blood pressure can lead to stroke, heart disease, kidney failure and blindness. In fact, high blood pressure is the most important risk factor for stroke.

Risk Factors FOR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

- ▶ Family History of High Blood Pressure
- ▶ Age
- ▶ Overweight and Obesity
- ▶ Inactive Lifestyle
- ▶ Cigarette Smoking
- ▶ Eating Too Much Salt
- ▶ Excessive Alcohol Use

WHAT DO THE NUMBERS MEAN?

120 The top number, called the systolic pressure, represents the pressure while the heart is beating.

80 The bottom number, called the diastolic pressure, represents the pressure when the heart is resting between beats.

By looking at both of these numbers, your physician can get an accurate picture of your blood pressure.

WHAT SHOULD YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE BE?

<120/80 **Optimal blood pressure** is less than 120/80 mm Hg for an adult.

120-139/80-89 Blood pressure that stays between 120-139/80-89 is considered **Prehypertension**. Talk to your doctor about lifestyle changes to lower your blood pressure.

140/90 or higher Above 140/90 mm Hg or higher is considered high blood pressure or **Hypertension**. You should see your doctor immediately if your blood pressure is over 140/90 mm Hg.

Continued on reverse.

Lifestyle Changes **CAN REDUCE YOUR RISK**

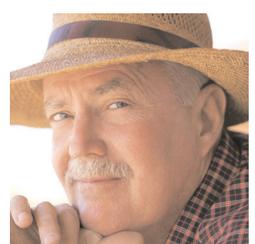
- ▶ **Maintain a healthy weight.**
- ▶ **Eat a low-salt and low-fat diet.**
- ▶ **Be physically active each day.**
- ▶ **Limit alcohol consumption.**
- ▶ **Don't smoke.**
- ▶ High blood pressure is easily detected and may be controllable with changes in lifestyle. If not controlled with these changes, medications are usually prescribed to control high blood pressure.
- ▶ If you have been diagnosed with high blood pressure, it is extremely important to take the medications prescribed by your physician. Remember, high blood pressure is "the silent killer".

Warning signs of **STROKE**

- ▶ Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- ▶ Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
- ▶ Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- ▶ Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
- ▶ Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.

Call 911 immediately if you or a loved one experience any of these warning signs!

Learn to recognize stroke because
time lost is brain lost.



PEOPLE WITH UNCONTROLLED HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE ARE:

7 times more likely to have a stroke

3 times more likely to develop coronary heart disease

6 times more likely to develop congestive heart failure

2005 ALABAMA DATA



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Alabama Department
of Public Health
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