

Did you know that high blood pressure affects approximately one out of every three American adults? High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, is a serious condition that can lead to numerous health problems including heart disease and stroke, which are the first and third leading causes of death in the United States. May is National High Blood Pressure Awareness Month, so it's a great time to learn more about this condition and what you can do to reduce your risk.

## What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the force of blood against the artery walls. It is measured and recorded as two numbers – systolic pressure (when the heart beats) over diastolic pressure (when the heart relaxes between beats). High blood pressure is called the silent killer because it has no direct symptoms. It can lead to heart disease, heart failure, stroke, blindness, kidney disease and kidney failure.

## Blood Pressure Categories and Ranges (18 years and up)

Category	Systolic	and	Diastolic
Normal	< 120		< 80
Pre-hypertension	120-139	or	80-89
<b>High blood pressure</b>			
Stage 1	140-159	or	90-99
Stage 2	> 160	or	> 100

## Are you at risk?

Anyone can develop high blood pressure but there are many factors that can increase your risk.

### Uncontrollable risk factors:

Age	Genetics
Gender	Race

### Controllable risk factors:

Obesity	Alcohol consumption
Sedentary lifestyle	Salt intake
Using tobacco products	Stress

You can greatly reduce your risk for developing high blood pressure by making lifestyle changes to improve the risk factors you have control over.



# SuccessStories

“My Health Coach has helped show me the way and given me great, practical advice.”



I recently suffered a death in the family, and this has made life challenging to say the very least. I have had high blood pressure for some time but have never really focused on what I could do to make it better. My Health Coach has helped show me the way and given me great, practical advice on how to make lasting changes. I now walk two to four miles each day for exercise. I have increased my fruit and vegetable intake to seven servings per day. I have even lost a little weight, which is always a bonus. Most importantly, I'm getting my blood pressure under control. My diastolic blood pressure is down from the 100's to 87! I am thrilled by the progress I have made. Your support has helped make this difficult time a little easier and allowed me to continue to focus on making the healthy lifestyle changes that I am determined to make.

Maggie

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## Coach Highlight

Health coaching is both professionally and personally rewarding. As a nurse for the past 19 years, I have had the opportunity to help others in several ways. My past surgical career gave me a look at what can happen when simple health issues are neglected. And being a Health Coach for the past four years has allowed me to help other's make the necessary lifestyle changes to actually prevent illness. I get a great sense of self-satisfaction when I help someone by supplying information, clarifying information they already have and working with them to develop a plan to reach their desired goals. Working here has also reminded me about the importance of always having a personal health goal to strive for.



*Diana*