

Heart Health



Blood pressure is typically recorded as two numbers, written as a ratio like this:

117

76 mm Hg

Read as "117 over 76 millimeters of mercury."

Systolic

The top number, which is also the higher of the two numbers, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart beats (when the heart muscle contracts).

Diastolic

The bottom number, which is also the lower of the two numbers, measures the pressure in the arteries between heartbeats (when the heart muscle is resting between beats and refilling with blood).

What is the American Heart Association (AHA) recommendation for healthy blood pressure?

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mm Hg (upper number)		Diastolic mm Hg (lower number)
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Elevated	120 – 129	and	Less than 80
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2	140 or higher	or	90 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis (Consult your doctor immediately!)	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 120

*Chart reflects blood pressure categories defined by the AHA
 **Your healthcare provider should evaluate unusually low blood pressure readings

Date _____

Blood Pressure _____ / _____