

How Can I Monitor My Cholesterol, Blood Pressure and Weight?

High cholesterol, high blood pressure and being overweight or obese are major risk factors for heart disease and stroke. You should be tested regularly to know if you have high blood cholesterol or high blood pressure. That's because elevated cholesterol and blood pressure have no warning signs.

And you should talk to your doctor about a healthy weight for you.

You can manage your blood pressure, blood cholesterol levels and weight with the tracker below. Work with a healthcare professional to determine your "goal" levels. Then ask how often to measure your levels. Record your levels and the date they were taken to track your progress.

	Goal	Today's Date	Today's Date	Today's Date	Today's Date	Today's Date
Blood Pressure (mm Hg)						
Total Cholesterol (mg/dL)						
LDL Cholesterol (mg/dL)						
HDL Cholesterol (mg/dL)						
Weight (pounds)						

What can I do to lower my cholesterol and blood pressure?

- Eat a nutritious, well-balanced diet low in saturated fats, *trans* fats and cholesterol that includes lots of fruits, vegetables and fat-free dairy products.
- Eat no more than 6 ounces per day of cooked meat, seafood or poultry.
- Choose lean cuts of meat, trim all visible fat and throw away the fat that cooks out of the meat.
- Substitute meatless or "low-meat" main dishes for regular entrees.
- Use a minimal amount of fats and oils, usually no more than 2 to 3 servings a day depending on your caloric needs.
- Use less salt. Limit the amount of salty foods you eat.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink. If you're a woman, don't drink more than one drink a day. If you're a man, have no more than two drinks a day.
- Do at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most or all days of the week.
- Take your medicines as prescribed.

How can I manage my weight?

Even modest weight loss (5 to 10 percent of your body weight) can help lower your risk for heart disease and stroke. Check with your doctor before starting a program.

- Reduce the number of calories you eat. Excess calories add excess weight.

- Do at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most (preferably all) days of the week. Building up to one hour or more of daily moderate-intensity physical activity can have a significant effect on weight control.

How can I learn more?

1. Talk to your doctor, nurse or other health-care professionals. If you have heart disease or have had a stroke, members of your family also may be at higher risk. It's very important for them to make changes now to lower their risk.
2. Call 1-800-AHA-USA1 (1-800-242-8721) or visit americanheart.org to learn more about heart disease.

3. For information on stroke, call 1-888-4-STROKE (1-888-478-7653) or visit StrokeAssociation.org.

We have many other fact sheets and educational booklets to help you make healthier choices to reduce your risk, manage disease or care for a loved one.

Knowledge is power, so *Learn and Live!*

What are the warning signs of heart attack and stroke?

Warning Signs of Heart Attack

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most of them start slowly with mild pain or discomfort with one or more of these symptoms:

- **Chest discomfort**
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body**
- **Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort**
- **Other signs including breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness**

Warning Signs of Stroke

- **Sudden weakness or numbness 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**

Learn to recognize a stroke. Time lost is brain lost.

Call 9-1-1 ... Get to a hospital immediately if you experience signs of a heart attack or stroke!

Do you have questions or comments for your doctor or nurse?

Take a few minutes to write your own questions for the next time you see your healthcare provider. For example:

What kind of physical activity would be good for me?

How can I know what my weight should be?

What's the most important change I can make?

Your contribution to the American Heart Association supports research that helps make publications like this possible.

The statistics in this sheet were up to date at publication. For the latest statistics, see the Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics Update at americanheart.org/statistics.

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