

# What is a normal blood pressure?

Hypertension raises the risk of heart disease and severe COVID-19.

August 4, 2020 By [Liz Highleyman](#)

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[According to the American Heart Association](#), a normal blood pressure is a systolic pressure (the top number) less than 120 and a diastolic pressure (the bottom number) less than 80—that is 120/80 or lower. A systolic number between 120 and 129 is considered elevated. A systolic number between 130 and 139 with a diastolic number between 80 and 89 indicates Stage 1 hypertension, while a systolic number of 140 or above with a diastolic number of 90 or higher is Stage 2 hypertension.

Experts estimate that between [a third](#) and [nearly half](#) of American adults have high blood pressure, which is more common among Black people. At early stages, it has no symptoms. Hypertension, one of the features of [metabolic syndrome](#), increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, heart failure, stroke and vision problems. What's more, high blood pressure is associated with more severe COVID-19 complications. Smoking cessation, weight loss, exercise and a healthy diet can help lower blood pressure. If this is not enough, medications can help keep it under control.

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