

What next?

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the pressure of blood in your arteries. If it is too high over a period of time and is not treated you will be more at risk of having a stroke or heart attack.

High blood pressure usually has no symptoms which is why many people don't know they have it.

The only way to find out is to have regular checks and remember the numbers in the same way as your height and weight.

Blood pressure record

Use this space to keep a record of your blood pressure readings. Use the 'What next?' table to the right to see what you need to do next. Keep it safe and get checked every 5 years unless instructed to get it checked sooner.

DATE			
e.g. 01/08/17	BP	140/90	Action 3
	BP		Action
	BP		Action
	BP		Action
	BP		Action
	BP		Action

Need advice?

If you have a question or concern about your blood pressure, advice can be provided by:

Blood Pressure UK
020 7882 6255
www.bloodpressureuk.org

www.nhs.uk

Your community pharmacy will also be able to help.

	Blood pressure reading	What this means	What do I need to do?	Do I need medical review?
1	129/84mmHg or less	Your blood pressure is healthy	Follow the lifestyle advice in this leaflet to prevent your blood pressure going up with age. Re-check in 5 years	No
2	Between 130/85 - 139/89mmHg	Your blood pressure is on the high side of normal	Make lifestyle changes outlined in this leaflet to help lower your blood pressure to 129/84mmHg. Re-check in 1 year	No
3	140/90 - 179/109mmHg	If your readings are consistently at or above this level you may have high blood pressure	Get a follow-up measurement e.g. by local pharmacy, practice nursing team or self-testing within 1 week. Make the lifestyle changes within this leaflet. See GP surgery within 1 month if blood pressure is still within this range	YES If readings are consistently within this range see your GP surgery within 1 month of first reading
4	>180/110mmHg	Very high blood pressure reading	Re-check after 5 minutes. Seek medical attention	YES Seek IMMEDIATE medical attention if symptoms present (headache, blurred vision, chest pain, difficulty breathing) If no symptoms, seek same day medical review.
5	Irregular pulse (not previously known)	The blood pressure machine detected an irregular pulse	If this is a new finding seek medical review for the irregular pulse and for a repeat manual blood pressure check	YES Seek IMMEDIATE medical attention if displaying symptoms (chest pain, breathlessness, palpitations) If no symptoms, seek medical review within 48 hours
6	90/60mmHg Low blood pressure	Low blood pressure is usually healthy	See NHS Choices www.nhs.uk for advice	If frequent symptoms (dizziness, light headed, blurred vision, weakness, confusion, fainting) see GP
7	Error reading	Technical difficulties	Get blood pressure checked at alternative setting e.g. Pharmacy, GP surgery	Only if reading is raised (as above)

N.B An official diagnosis can only be given at your GP surgery

High blood pressure usually has no symptoms which is why nearly 300,000 people in Cheshire & Merseyside don't know they have it.

The only way to find out is to have regular checks.

Why is my blood pressure so important?

High blood pressure increases your risk of having a stroke or heart attack. It is also a risk factor for kidney disease, dementia and other illnesses.

If you have a raised blood pressure reading you should not ignore it. High blood pressure is a serious condition but can be successfully treated.



What causes high blood pressure?

Your lifestyle can affect your blood pressure. See the Healthy Lifestyle section opposite.

For most people there is no definite cause yet some things make it more likely:

- ♥ A family history of high blood pressure
- ♥ You are of Afro-Caribbean descent
- ♥ You are of South Asian descent
- ♥ Your age – blood pressure tends to go up as we get older



What do the numbers mean?

When you have your blood pressure measured it is written like this: 140/90mmHg, which is said "140 over 90". The first number occurs when your heart beats and pushes blood around your body. The second occurs when your heart relaxes and fills with blood.

What should my blood pressure be?

A healthy blood pressure is 120/80 or less. You should aim to get your blood pressure to this level. 140/90 is the level used to diagnose high blood pressure, whatever your age. If your blood pressure is consistently raised at this level or above, it will need to be lowered.

How can I lower my blood pressure?

You can lower your blood pressure by changing your lifestyle and, if necessary, by taking medication as directed by your doctor.

A few simple lifestyle changes can make all the difference

Eat more fruit and vegetables

These are the best source of potassium in the diet, which helps to lower blood pressure. Try to eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Don't forget that frozen, canned and dried varieties count too.



Eat less salt

An adult should eat less than 6g of salt a day. 75% of the salt we eat is "hidden" in our foods - make sure you check food labels for salt content and don't add it to your food.



Drink alcohol in moderation

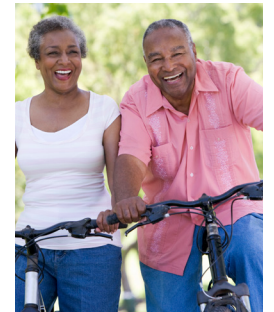
Men and women are advised not to drink more than 14 units* a week on a regular basis and to spread this over three or more days.

*see www.nhs.uk for information on alcohol guidance



Lose weight if you need to

If you lose the excess weight you will probably find that your blood pressure reduces.



Be active

Aim for half an hour of exercise on five days of the week. The exercise needs to make you breathe faster and warm you up.

Stop smoking

To reduce your risk of heart attack or stroke.



Medication

Some people will also need to take medication prescribed by their doctor to lower their blood pressure. Today's blood pressure tablets are very effective and can reduce your risk of stroke and heart attack.



Know your numbers and encourage your family and friends to do the same

Back

Front



Prevention

Saving lives | Reducing the pressure across Cheshire and Merseyside

Know your numbers!

Do you know your numbers?



Blood Pressure UK
Helping you to lower your blood pressure