

# HYPERTENSION



**Every time your heart beats, it creates pressure that pushes blood through your veins and arteries. When that pressure is too high for a long time, it can cause health problems, such as heart disease, heart attack, or stroke.**

The amount of blood your heart pumps and the narrowness or restriction in your blood vessels both contribute to high blood pressure. The force from high blood pressure can eventually damage your arteries, veins, and organs.

Approximately four in 10 adults older than 25 have hypertension. This means that nearly one billion people have hypertension. The unfortunate part is that around 50% of these people are unaware of their condition. Of those who are aware, half do not take any action to control their blood pressure, either through lifestyle modification or medication.

## Common causes

Most people develop high blood pressure for no apparent cause. Certain lifestyle factors, such as smoking, being overweight, or having a sedentary lifestyle, can contribute to it.

Sometimes, hypertension develops because of another condition. Conditions that may cause hypertension include:



Diabetes



Kidney  
disease



Obstructive sleep  
apnea (a type of sleep  
apnea in which the  
throat muscles relax  
and temporarily block  
the airway)



Thyroid  
disorders



Adrenal tumours that  
secrete excess  
aldosterone (a  
hormone that affects  
the body's ability to  
regulate blood  
pressure)

## The Ideal Numbers:

- Ideal blood pressure is 120/80mmHg.
- Blood pressure higher than 140/90 is classified as high blood pressure or hypertension.
- Blood pressure over 130/85mmHg is called pre-hypertension.

**In South Africa more than 90% of hypertensives are not controlled at < 140/90 mmHg.**



## Signs and Symptoms of Hypertension

There are no symptoms of hypertension. That's why it is important to have your blood pressure checked whenever you go to the doctor.

### Patients may experience:

- Severe headache
- Shortness of breath
- Nosebleeds
- Severe anxiety
- Feeling of pulsations in the neck or head



## Control high blood pressure by sticking to the following lifestyle changes:



- Take your chronic medication as prescribed and make sure to have at least a two-week supply on hand.
- Eat healthy, with plenty of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Choose non-fat dairy and lean meats.
- Exercise regularly and consistently as it lowers blood pressure and helps with stress and weight loss.
- Decrease salt intake in your diet.
- If you are obese, lose weight as it reduces your blood pressure.
- Quit smoking tobacco. Cigarettes and tobacco cause blood pressure to rise and plaque to build up quickly in your arteries.
- Manage stress in healthy ways and consider deep breathing or meditation techniques.
- Limit alcohol intake.



If you are concerned about your health talk to a Platinum Health Healthcare Provider for guidance.

<https://www.hypertension.org.za/pages/what-is-bp>  
<https://stanfordhealthcare.org/medical-conditions/blood-heart-circulation/high-blood-pressure/diagnosis.html>

