

# HEART HEALTH CHECK GUIDE



## Support heart research

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## Some things you can do to reduce your blood pressure

- Use less salt in cooking and on your food
- Reduce the amount of caffeine drinks. Have no more than 2-3 cups of coffee or tea a day
- Try some relaxing activities. For example, meditation and yoga
- Increase exercise levels
- For people with low blood pressure, drink more water and increase the amount of salt you eat

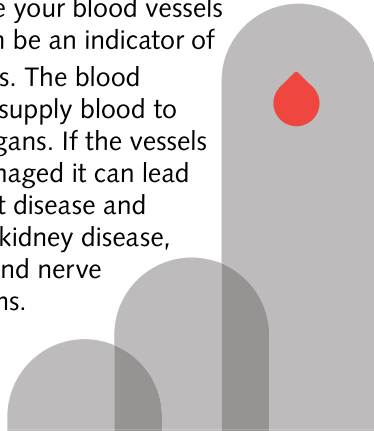
## What does blood pressure measure?

Blood pressure is a measurement of the health of your arteries. If your blood pressure is too high it puts a strain on your heart. High blood pressure can also speed up the process of coronary heart disease and increases your risk of having a stroke.



## Why your blood sugar level is important

Glucose or sugar is an important source of energy for your body and brain. But too much sugar can damage your blood vessels and can be an indicator of diabetes. The blood vessels supply blood to vital organs. If the vessels are damaged it can lead to heart disease and stroke, kidney disease, vision and nerve problems.



## How you can reduce your blood sugar

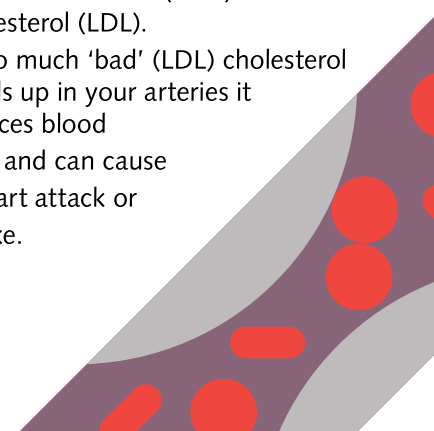
- Changing your diet is an effective way to reduce your blood sugar
- Swap white to brown/wholemeal bread, rice and pasta
- Replace soft drinks, energy drinks and fruit juices with water
- Eliminate sweets and sugary snacks

## What is cholesterol

Cholesterol is a form of fat that is found in our blood and cells. Cholesterol comes from the foods we eat and from our own body.

There are two types of cholesterol: 'Good' cholesterol (HDL) and 'Bad' cholesterol (LDL).

If too much 'bad' (LDL) cholesterol builds up in your arteries it reduces blood flow and can cause a heart attack or stroke.



## Ways to reduce your cholesterol

- Do more exercise
- Include more good fats in your diet, such as oily fish, nuts, seeds and avocado
- Eat fewer foods with saturated (animal) fats such as cheese and butter
- Eat less sugary and fried foods. These contain 'trans fats' which aren't good for you either
- Drink less alcohol

## Take this form to your GP and record your results each visit

### Your blood pressure

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

mm Hg

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

mm Hg

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

mm Hg

|                           | SYSTOLIC | DIASTOLIC |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|
| HEALTHY/<br>NORMAL        | < 120    | < 80      |
| ELEVATED                  | 120-129  | < 80      |
| HIGH - STAGE 1            | 130-139  | 80-89     |
| HIGH - STAGE 2            | ≥ 140    | ≥ 90      |
| CRISIS - CALL<br>A DOCTOR | > 180    | > 120     |

Your blood pressure readings contain two numbers. The higher number is your systolic blood pressure which measures the pressure as the heart contracts. The lower number (diastolic) measures the pressure in the artery as the heart relaxes.

### Your blood sugar

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

mmol/L

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

mmol/L

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

mmol/L

|               | FASTING | NON FASTING |
|---------------|---------|-------------|
| LOW           | < 3.9   | < 3.9       |
| HEALTHY       | 3.9-5.5 | 3.9-7.8     |
| ELEVATED      | 5.6-6.9 | 7.9-11.0    |
| DIABETES RISK | > 7.0   | > 11.0      |

Your blood sugar level is the amount of glucose present in your blood. Non-fasting blood sugar results will be affected by what you have eaten or drunk in the last four hours.

### Your total cholesterol

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

mmol/L

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

mmol/L

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

mmol/L

|          | TOTAL CHOLESTEROL |
|----------|-------------------|
| HEALTHY  | < 5.5             |
| ELEVATED | 5.5-6.5           |
| HIGH     | > 6.6             |

There are two main types of cholesterol. LDL (bad cholesterol) can build up in your arteries causing blockages, but HDL (good cholesterol) helps clear the arteries.

### TALK TO YOUR GP

Results are solely for information purposes and are not medical advice. Please remember that these results must be interpreted in the context of your medical history.

We recommend visiting your GP, who can fully evaluate your results and if necessary discuss a treatment plan with you.

#### Prevention is the best defence

- Maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle, keep active
- Follow a healthy diet with lots of vegetables and good fats
- Exercise for 30-60 minutes to get heart rate up, five times per week
- Walk 10,000 steps daily
- Build muscle mass with weight resistance exercises, two times per week
- Reduce alcohol intake
- Quit smoking (call 13 QUIT)
- Know your family history
- Get regular screening and testing and understand your results