

The NALC Health Benefit Plan



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HBR Report



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May 2018

Blood Pressure Education Month



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Director's Report



Blood Pressure Education

May is Blood Pressure Education Month. Do you know your numbers? Included below are some of the hereditary and modifiable risk factors.

Common hereditary and physical risk factors for high blood pressure include:

Family history

If your parents or other close blood relatives have high blood pressure, there's an increased chance that you'll get it, too.

Age

The older you are, the more likely you are to get high blood pressure. As we age, our blood vessels gradually lose some of their elastic quality, which can contribute to increased blood pressure. However, children can also develop high blood pressure.

Gender

Until age 64, men are more likely to get high blood pressure than women are. At 65 and older, women are more likely to get high blood pressure.

Race

African-Americans tend to develop high blood pressure more often than people of any other racial background in the United States. It also tends to be more severe in African Americans, and some medications are less effective in treating HBP in blacks.

Chronic kidney disease (CKD)

HBP may occur as a result of kidney disease. And, having HBP may also may also cause further kidney damage.

Modifiable risk factors you can change to help prevent and manage high blood pressure, including:

- Lack of physical activity
- An unhealthy diet, especially one high in sodium
- Being overweight or obese
- Drinking too much alcohol
- Sleep apnea
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Smoking and tobacco use
- Stress



Blood Pressure Education Month

Make Changes That Matter



Do you know the signs of high blood pressure? It's a trick question — because HBP, also known as the “silent killer,” typically has no symptoms. That's why it's so important to check your blood pressure and take steps to control your numbers.

May is National High Blood Pressure Education Month. Check your blood pressure and find out where your numbers fall on the new American Heart Association blood pressure chart — and make changes that matter.

Adjusting your habits now — like moving more and reducing sodium — can help you avoid a high blood pressure diagnosis and stay strong for the future. And by tracking your BP at home, you'll be the first to see how your healthy new habits are affecting your numbers.

Know Your Numbers

Learn what the numbers in your blood pressure reading mean.

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

Blood Pressure Education Month

130 is Too High



Under new American Heart Association guidelines announced in 2017, the definition of high blood pressure is lower, and the number of U.S. adults considered to have high blood pressure has increased. Younger people are impacted the most, as high blood pressure has tripled among men under 45 and doubled among women in the same age group.

High blood pressure is often symptomless and can be a “silent killer” at any age — and the only way to know your risk is to have your blood pressure checked. This May, during National High Blood Pressure Education Month, do yourself and your family a favor:

1. Have your blood pressure checked and review the categories at heart.org/bplevels to understand what your numbers mean.
2. Be counted as someone who knows their numbers at heart.org/bplevels. Click on the “I’ve Checked My Blood Pressure” button!
3. Encourage the people you care about to know their numbers, too.

CONSEQUENCES

of High Blood Pressure



Check.
Change.
Control.

High blood pressure is often the first domino in a chain or “**domino effect**” leading to devastating consequences, like:



STROKE

HBP can cause blood vessels in the brain to burst or clog more easily.



VISION LOSS

HBP can strain the vessels in the eyes.



HEART FAILURE

HBP can cause the heart to enlarge and fail to supply blood to the body.

HEART ATTACK

HBP damages arteries that can become blocked.



SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION

This can be erectile dysfunction in men or lower libido in women.

KIDNEY DISEASE/ FAILURE

HBP can damage the arteries around the kidneys and interfere with their ability to effectively filter blood.



A simple **blood pressure check** is the first step to preventing the “domino effect.”

Learn more at heart.org/hbp.

Blood Pressure Education Month

Keep It Low

Even if your numbers are within the normal range on the new American Heart Association blood pressure chart, May is the perfect month to check your blood pressure and give your lifestyle a checkup. Blood pressure naturally rises as you age, so consistency is key in keeping it low.

- Are you eating a heart-healthy diet?
- Cutting out excess sodium?
- Limiting alcohol?
- Avoiding cigarettes?
- Making exercise a regular part of your routine?

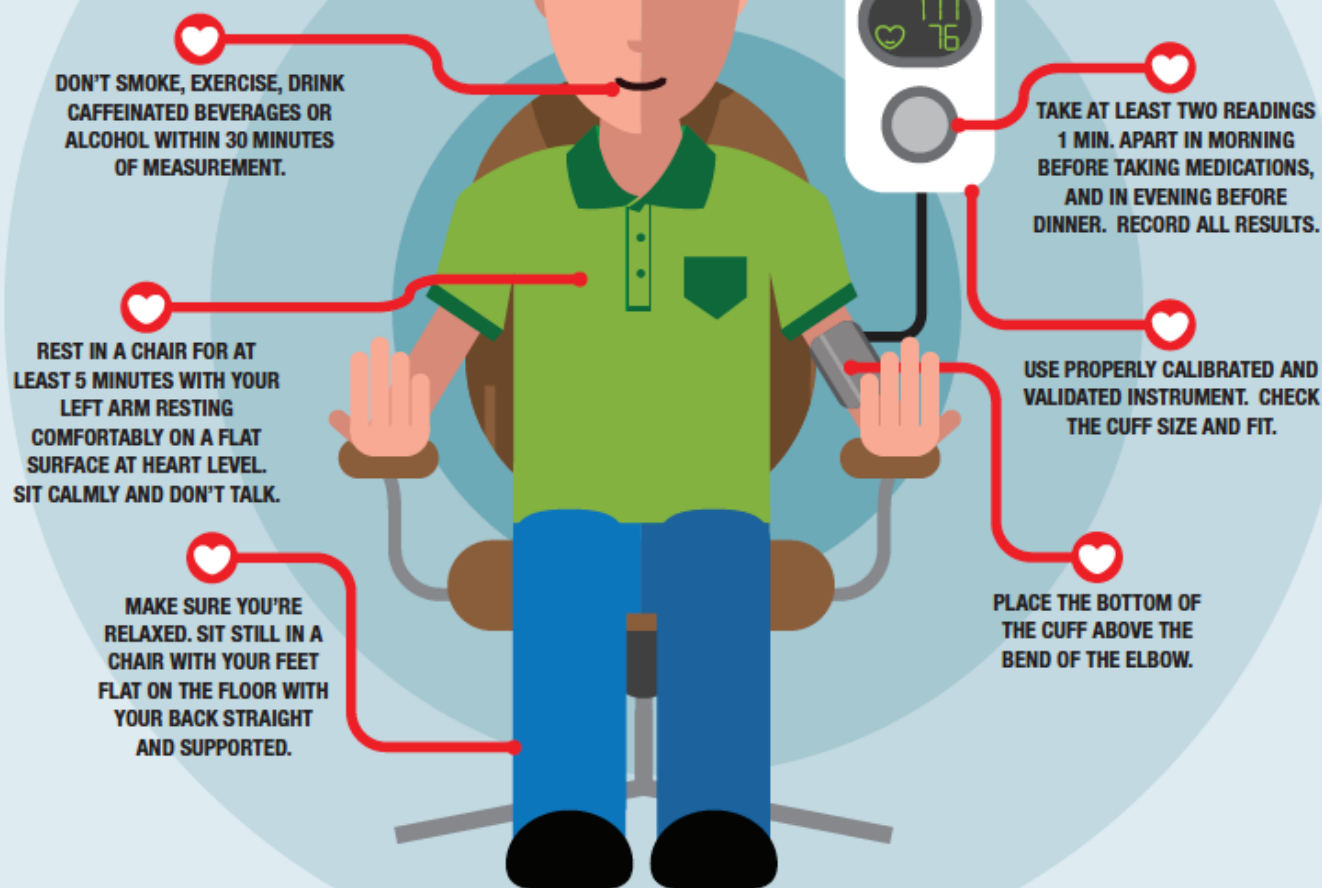
If so, keep up the good work! And if not, we'd like to encourage you to kick-start some healthy habits during National High Blood Pressure Education Month to help keep your BP low.



© American Heart Association. For more information go to www.heart.org.



BLOOD PRESSURE MEASUREMENT INSTRUCTIONS



American Heart Association recommended blood pressure levels

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NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120-129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130-139	or	80-89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120



*Wait a few minutes and take blood pressure again. If it's still high, contact your doctor immediately.

LEARN MORE AT
HEART.ORG/HBP

Blood Pressure Education Month



KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

What do your blood pressure numbers mean?

The only way to know (diagnose) if you have high blood pressure (HBP or hypertension) is to have your blood pressure tested. Understanding your blood pressure numbers is key to controlling high blood pressure.

NALC Health Benefit Plan	888-636-NALC
Recorded Benefit Information	888-636-NALC
Prescription Drug Program	800-933-NALC
CVS/caremark Specialty Pharmacy	800-237-2767
PPO Network Providers	877-220-NALC
Precertification	877-220-NALC
Fraud Hot Line	888-636-NALC
Mental Health / Substance Abuse	877-468-1016