

# What is high blood pressure (hypertension)?

Blood pressure is the force at which blood flows through the large blood vessels from the heart. When blood pressure is high over a period of time, a condition called hypertension, it can lead to health problems, including a stroke or heart failure. High blood pressure is when the force of the blood is too strong within the arteries when the heart is squeezing and relaxing. This causes your heart to pump harder to circulate the blood, which causes the heart to weaken over time.

### NHRMC Programs and Supports:

It's important to watch your blood pressure and cholesterol levels to keep you well. If those levels get too high, your risk for heart disease and stroke increases. If you struggle with high blood pressure, NHRMC can help. We'll monitor your condition, talk with you about lifestyle changes, and prescribe medications when needed. Contact us for an appointment at any of our NHRMC Physician Group Primary Care practices. Visit [nhrmcphysiciangroup.org](http://nhrmcphysiciangroup.org) to learn more about our practices and find the location most convenient for you.

### How I can improve my blood pressure:

- Choose foods that are low in salt (sodium). (When reading a label on packaged foods, look for less than 140 mg of sodium (salt) per serving).
  - Choose foods low in calories and fat. (Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at meals).
  - Choose foods high in fiber. (Aim for 3 grams of fiber or more per serving of fruits, vegetables, or grains).
- Stay at a healthy weight, or lose weight if you are overweight.
  - Limit serving sizes. Start by paying attention to the recommended serving size on a package.
  - Get more exercise.
  - Drink fewer or no alcoholic beverages.
  - Reduce stress.
  - Get enough quality sleep.

### NHRMC PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

**Transitional Disease Management Support:** Patients discharging from NHRMC with high blood pressure who are at high risk for readmission may receive follow-up phone calls from an NHRMC nurse and potentially a home visit from a Community Paramedic to help make a smooth transition back to living in your home. Call 910.667.7275 to reach the Transitional Disease Management team.

- **NHRMC ExpressCare** is available for any urgent medical needs. Learn more at [nhrmc.org/services/expresscare](http://nhrmc.org/services/expresscare).
- **VitaLine** provides free, confidential access to nonurgent health information from experienced registered nurses and other professionally trained staff who can help connect you to the care you need. Call 888-815-5188 to reach the VitaLine team, who will follow up with you at their earliest convenience.

### Additional References and Resources:

- **American Heart Association:** Find Healthy for Good Recipes at [recipes.heart.org/en](http://recipes.heart.org/en)
- **American Heart Association Education and Support:** [www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure](http://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure)