

**I've been told I have high
blood pressure.**

What does this mean?



An EasyRead Version

What is blood pressure?



Your heart pumps blood around your body. The force at which it pumps is called blood pressure.

Your blood pressure is made up of 2 numbers, for example 120 over 80.



The higher number is called systolic pressure. This is the pressure when your heart pushes blood out.

The lower number is called diastolic pressure. This is the pressure when your heart rests between beats.



High blood pressure or hypertension can cause you to have serious health problems like heart attacks and strokes.



It is important to get it treated to cut down your risk of getting ill.

Treating high blood pressure



High blood pressure can be treated by taking medication and or making lifestyle changes such as:



- Giving up smoking
- Drinking less alcohol
- Being a healthy weight



- Exercising more
- Eating a healthy diet which has low levels of fat and salt.



If your blood pressure is only a bit higher than it should be, you might not have to take medication.

What can I do?

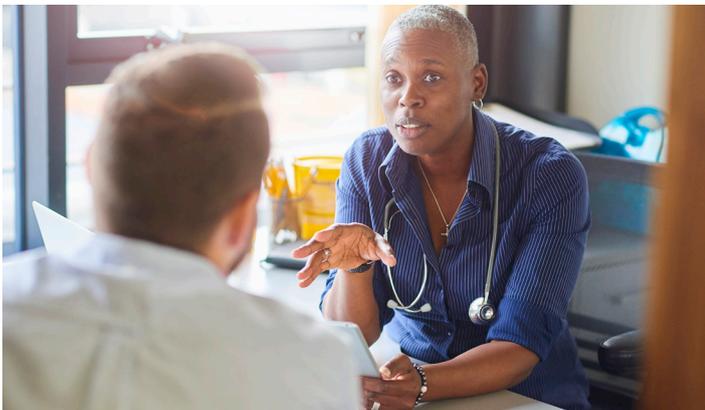


Talk to your doctor or nurse about making lifestyle changes.

If your hypertension is mild, then making these changes could be all you need to do. You will also feel fitter and healthier.



If you need to take medication your doctor or nurse will talk to you about which one is best. You might need to take more than one.



Sometimes you can get side effects from taking blood pressure medication.

Tell your doctor or nurse if this happens to you. They can give you a lower dose or change your medication.



If you don't do anything to control your blood pressure, you are at high risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

For more information please contact:

btm

the home of accessible information



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