

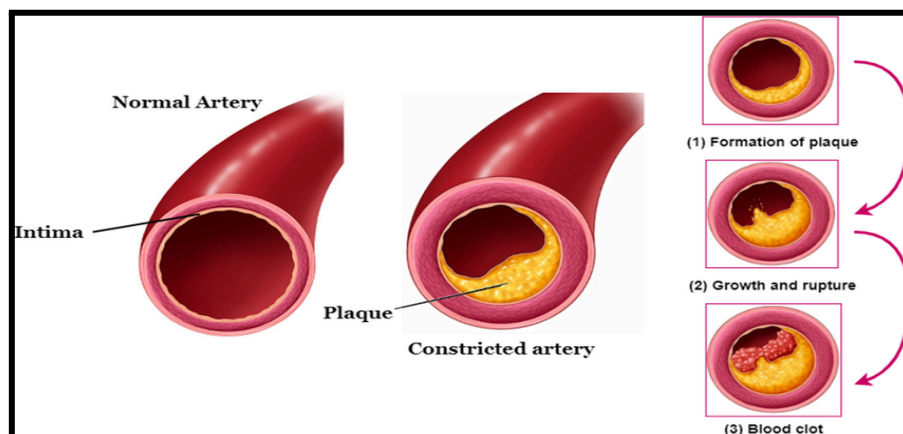
What is hypertension and why it is important

Did you know that one in four adults, approximately 230 million people suffer from hypertension (high blood pressure) in India? but only about 12% of these have their blood pressure under control. It can happen at all ages to both men & women alike.

Blood pressure is the pressure of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. Arteries carry blood from your heart to other parts of the body.

Blood pressure is recorded as two numbers, such as 120/80. The larger (Systolic) number denotes the pressure when the heart pumps out blood. The smaller (Diastolic) number is the pressure when the heart relaxes between two beats. A blood pressure reading above 140 millimetres of mercury (mm Hg) and more than 90 mm Hg is considered high blood pressure. Continued high blood pressure levels increase the risks of health problems such as heart disease, heart attack, and stroke.

A momentary spike in blood pressure can occur in stressful situations such as getting a health checkup, at a doctor's office, fear, excitement, excessive exercise, joy or trauma. This will go away after the stimulus subsides.



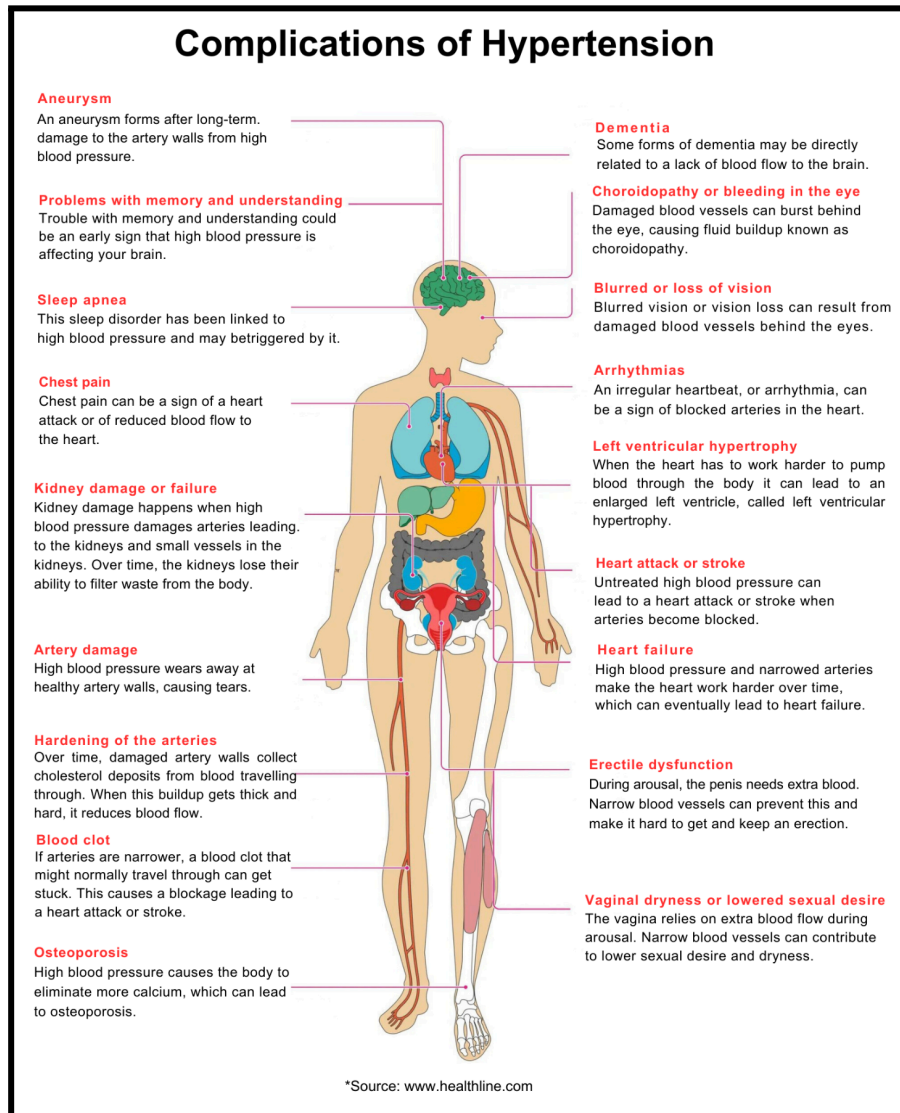
Source - www.researchgate.net

What is the harm caused by high blood pressure?

High blood pressure can damage blood vessels and body organs leading to severe complications such as:

- Heart diseases
- Aneurysms/Blood clots
- Changes in memory or dementia

- Sleep apnea
- Kidney damage or failure
- Eye problems
- Osteoporosis
- Sexual dysfunctions



What are the symptoms and how can I detect high blood pressure?

People with high blood pressure may not feel symptoms until it reaches an advanced stage. The only way to know is to get your blood pressure checked regularly. Severe high blood pressure can cause symptoms such as

- Severe headaches
- Chest pain
- Dizziness, nausea or vomiting
- Difficulty in breathing or abnormal heart rhythm

- Blurred vision or other vision changes
- Anxiety or confusion
- Buzzing in the ears
- Nosebleeds

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms and have blood pressure higher than **140/90** seek medical care immediately.

Blood pressure range

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

Source - [American Heart Association](#)

What are the risk factors that cause hypertension?

There are two types of hypertension- Primary which anyone can get and Secondary which is caused by underlying diseases. Primary and Secondary hypertension can co-exist.

Primary hypertension is prevalent in about 90% of affected people, it develops gradually due to any one or a combination of several factors such as:

- Family history in parents or siblings due to genetic reasons
- Obesity or being overweight causes changes in the blood vessels
- [Lack of exercise leads to higher heart rates](#)
- Use of tobacco or vaping injures blood vessel walls by hardening the arteries
- Too much salt increases water retention putting extra pressure on blood vessels
- Excess alcohol consumption impairs the muscles of the blood vessels making them narrower

Secondary hypertension is caused by other underlying diseases or some medications such as:

- Congenital heart defects
- Kidney disease
- [Obstructive sleep apnea](#)
- [Thyroid problems](#)
- Cough and cold medicines, some pain relievers, birth control pills, and other prescription drugs
- Illegal drugs, such as cocaine and amphetamines

Secondary hypertension can improve or even go away when the underlying disease is identified and treated effectively.

What is the treatment for high blood pressure?

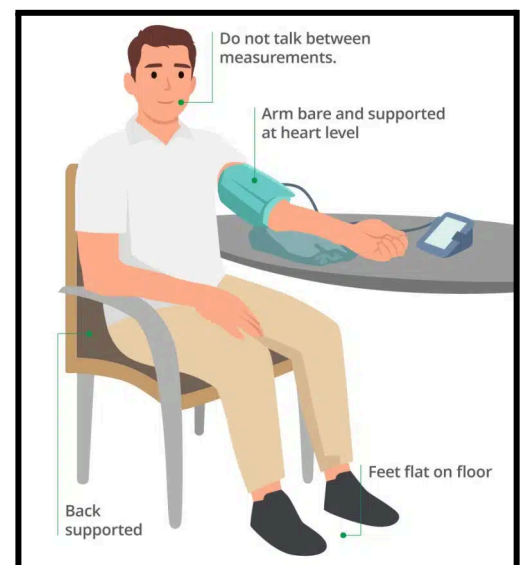
BP conditions can be managed by regular monitoring, medication and lifestyle changes. Seek your doctor's advice for a comprehensive treatment plan.

A variety of medicines is available, however, the doctor will customise the salt, doses, and timings of intake, to suit the patient's overall condition. Compliance with prescriptions is crucial for maintaining a healthy BP. Remember to inform the doctor of other medications that you normally take. Do not self-medicate, miss or adjust doses independently. Never copy or try medicines that your friends or family members take. Keep sufficient stock of your BP medicines handy at all times especially while travelling.

Be cautious not to consume alcohol, salt or caffeine immediately after taking medicines.

If High BP is ignored for a long time it can result in serious consequences. This is why regular monitoring of blood pressure is crucial to contain it.

Regular monitoring: Blood pressure can be easily checked by health care professionals, however, you can measure it at [home with a Blood Pressure Monitoring instrument](#). This helps to keep track of



your readings, early detection of any changes and timely intervention if needed. Remember to calibrate the readings of your home instrument with your doctor's instrument.

Tips to keep your blood pressure healthy, for prevention, or managing it with lifestyle changes:

- Keep weight healthy
- Exercise regularly (average of 30 minutes a day and Yoga)
- Learn to relax, and avoid stress
- Eat plenty of fruits, and vegetables and avoid fried foods (Know More: [DASH diet](#))
- Cut down on salt
- Cut down on fat and sugar
- Quit smoking
- Reduce caffeine intake
- Consume alcohol in moderation

Hypertension is a silent killer as symptoms show up much later or go undetected. It is a serious disease that affects young and old, men and women alike and can happen at any time during your lifetime. Current lifestyle, work pressures and increased stress levels are affecting younger people and the incidence is increasing. Being alert, monitoring your blood pressure regularly, following medications prescribed and adopting the tips given for a healthy lifestyle can help avoid serious harm.

HYPERTENSION: ACT NOW!

What is hypertension?

Blood pressure is the force of circulating blood against the walls of the body's arteries, the major blood vessels in the body. Hypertension is when the force of the blood pressure is excessive.

Most people with high blood pressure **DO NOT KNOW THEY HAVE IT.**

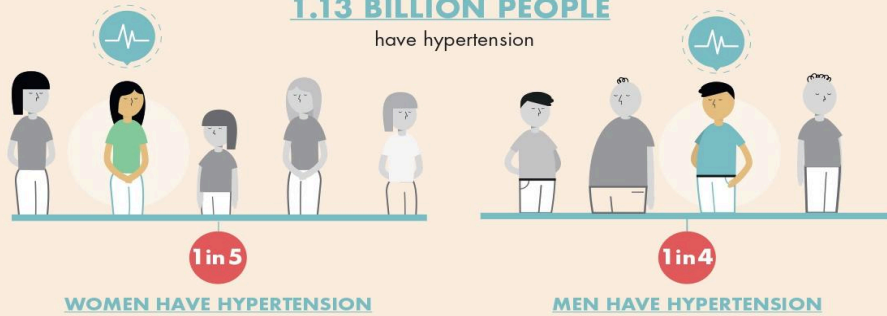


Hypertension is diagnosed if blood pressure readings are **140-90** or above on two different days.

How many people have high blood pressure?

1.13 BILLION PEOPLE

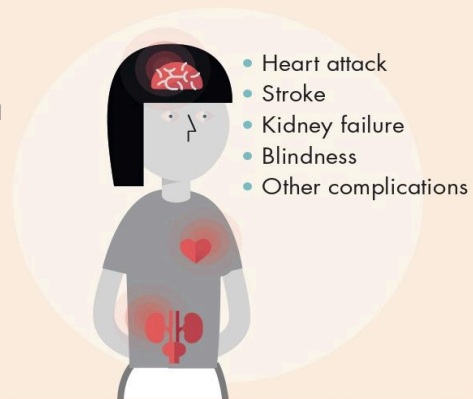
have hypertension



What are the risk factors?

-  Salt consumption
-  Harmful use of alcohol
-  Low intake of fruits and vegetables
-  Lack of physical activity
-  Saturated fat and trans fats
-  Tobacco use
-  Being overweight or obese

What are the consequences?



Source - WHO

How to prevent hypertension?

- Reduce salt (to less than 5g daily)
- Eat fruit and vegetables regularly
- Avoid saturated fats and trans fats
- Avoid tobacco
- Reduce alcohol
- Be physically active, daily



How to detect hypertension?


Health workers should regularly check people's blood pressure.



People might have high blood pressure **WITHOUT ANY WARNING SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS.**

How to control hypertension?


Hypertension treatment is indicated for adults whose blood pressure is **140 – 90** mmHG or higher. Treatment adherence is critical for blood pressure control.




- Follow medical advice and adhere to lifestyle changes
- Take medicines as prescribed
- Regularly check blood pressure
- Reduce and manage stress

HEARTS


HEARTS is a technical package to help health workers improve cardiovascular health in primary health care through hypertension detection and management.



Healthy-lifestyle counselling




Evidence-based treatment protocols



Access to essential medicines and technology



Team-based care



Systems for monitoring

www.who.int/cardiovascular_diseases/hearts/en/



Source - [WHO](#)

To know more:

- [Control high blood pressure without medication](#)
- [Hypertension as Silent killer](#)
- [Prevent and Manage High Blood Pressure](#)

My Health, My Responsibility