

What is Blood Pressure?



Blood pressure refers to the force exerted by circulating blood on the walls of blood vessels, and constitutes one of the principal vital signs.

The pressure of the circulating blood decreases as blood moves through arteries, arterioles, capillaries, and veins; the term blood pressure generally refers to arterial pressure, i.e., the pressure in the larger arteries, arteries being the blood vessels, which take blood away from the heart. Blood pressure is always given as two numbers - systolic pressure (when the heart beats) and diastolic pressure (when the heart relaxes). When the measurements are written down, both are written one above or before the other with the systolic being the first number.

Normal Blood Pressure - Blood pressure reading below 120/80 is considered normal.

High Blood Pressure - Blood pressure of 140/90 or higher is considered high blood pressure. If one or both numbers are usually high, you have high blood pressure.

Low Blood Pressure - Blood pressure that is too low is known as hypotension. The similarity in pronunciation with hypertension can cause confusion.

High Blood Pressure Range

Systolic pressure (mm Hg)	Diastolic pressure (mm Hg)	Stages of High Blood Pressure
210	120	Stage 4
180	110	Stage 3
160	100	Stage 2
140	90	Stage 1

Normal Blood Pressure Range

Systolic pressure (mm Hg)	Diastolic pressure (mm Hg)	Pressure Range
130	85	High Normal Blood Pressure
120	80	Normal Blood Pressure
110	75	Low Normal Blood Pressure

Low Blood Pressure Range

Systolic pressure (mm Hg)	Diastolic pressure (mm Hg)	Pressure Range
90	60	Borderline Low Blood Pressure
60	40	Too Low Blood Pressure
50	33	Dangerously Low Blood Pressure