

## High Blood Pressure (Essential Hypertension)

**Hypertension** is the term for blood pressure that is consistently higher than normal. It is called “essential” when no cause for the high blood pressure is found. About 95% of all people with hypertension have essential hypertension. Of the remaining 5% there are medical reasons driving the blood pressure. We will be checking your blood pressure, IKG, exam results, and labs to make sure that you are in the 95% group of essential hypertension.

- Healthy Blood Pressure is less than 120/80
- Stage I High Blood Pressure ranges from 140/90 to 159/99
- State II High Blood Pressure is over 160/100

If repeated tests show your blood pressure remains higher than 140/90, you have hypertension.

Many other factors will increase your blood pressure. You can control these factors with lifestyle changes. These factors include:

- Being overweight
- Smoking or use of tobacco products
- Eating a high salt diet
- Drinking a lot of alcohol

Untreated hypertension, over time, will cause heart attacks and strokes. The blood vessels will harden and your heart will eventually give out.

The most cost effective and simplest thing you can do for your health is to treat your blood pressure and prevent all these complications. Lifestyle changes and medications work the best when done together.

We encourage anyone with pre-hypertension and hypertension to actively measure and monitor your home blood pressure readings. We recommend you purchase a blood pressure machine (Omron brand is the best).

Blood pressure monitoring is for life, whether or not you are taking medications.

Medications are effective, most have little to no side effects, and many are available as generic alternatives to save you money.

Starting on blood pressure medications does not always mean you are taking these for life. Some people are able to modify their lifestyles and can stop blood pressure medications. It is not unusual to go on and off blood pressure medications throughout your life, depending on how you respond to treatment and lifestyle interventions.

We recommend that you:

- Check your blood pressure at every visit.
- Have your blood pressure checked within 4-8 weeks when starting new medications or changing medications.

We expect you to have a minimum of 2 visits a year with us; one for an annual health review and the other for a blood pressure visit. If your blood pressure is not well managed, we will require additional, more frequent visits.