

Health tip: Know your numbers

Tips to help you stay on top of your health

One of the first steps to improving your health is knowing your important health numbers. These numbers include knowing your body mass index, blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose numbers.



BMI

- Healthy Weight: 18.5 to 24.9
- Overweight: 25 to 29.9
- Obese: 30 or higher



Blood Pressure

- Normal: Systolic less than 120 and diastolic less than 80
- Elevated: Systolic between 120 and 129 and diastolic less than 80
- Stage 1 Hypertension: Systolic between 130 and 139 or diastolic between 80 and 89
- Stage 2 Hypertension: Systolic 140 or higher or diastolic 90 or higher
- Hypertensive Crisis: Systolic higher than 180 and/or diastolic higher than 120



Cholesterol

- Total Cholesterol: Less than 200 mg/dL
- HDL Cholesterol for Men: Higher than 40 mg/dL
- HDL Cholesterol for Women: Higher than 50 mg/dL
- LDL Cholesterol: Less than 100mg/dL



Glucose

- Optimal Fasting Level: less than 100 mg/dL

Consider a more heart-healthy diet

Eating heart-healthy means your diet should include plenty of these food choices:

- Vegetables from all subgroups—dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starches
- Fruits, especially whole fruits to get all the nutrients (such as fiber)
- Grains, at least half of which are high fiber whole grains. Aim for 25-30 grams of fiber a day. Look for whole-grain cereal, breads, crackers, oatmeal, noodles and brown rice
- Fat-free or low-fat dairy, including milk, yogurt, cheese, and/or fortified soy beverages
- A variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), nuts, and seeds

Limit your intake of these foods

- Saturated and trans fats as these may raise your cholesterol
- Sodium which may increase blood pressure
- Red meat and compare food labels to select the leanest cuts available
- Sweets and sugar sweetened beverages

Practice habits that may help keep your heart healthier

- Exercise regularly
- Eat a heart-healthy diet
- Maintain a healthier weight
- Manage your blood pressure
- Take charge of your cholesterol
- Keep blood sugar at healthy levels
- Don't smoke

Consider 30 minutes of moderate physical activity

Finding time for 30 minutes of moderate exercise on most days of the week can provide many of the same benefits as strenuous exercise. Physical activity is anything that gets the body moving, including walking.

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Sources:
Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025, <https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/>, accessed April 2021.
National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>, accessed April 2021.
American Heart Association, www.heart.org, accessed April 2021.

This information is for general informational purposes only and is not intended nor should be construed as medical advice. Individuals should consult an appropriate medical professional to determine what may be right for them.