



a. Definition of high blood pressure (hypertension)

Hypertension is elevation of Blood Pressure SBP \geq 140 mmHg and DBP \geq 90 mmHg measured atleast three separate occasions.

**NB. People with high blood pressure may not feel symptoms.
The only way to know is to go get your blood pressure checked.**

b. Diagnostic Criteria

- i. Blood Pressure should be measured on three separate occasions, a minimum of 2 days apart and/or taken over period of two months. If blood the measured value is between SBP 140-159 and DBP 90-99 mmHg meaning hypertension grade 1.
- ii. Minimum of 3 blood pressure readings must be taken at the first visit to confirm hypertension if the measured value is grade 2 (SBP 160-179 & DBP 100-109 mmHg) Grade 3 (SBP greater than 180 & DBP greater than 110 mmHg).
- iii. In pregnancy blood pressure greater than 140/90 mmHg measured on two occasion atleast four hours apart or elevated systolic BP greater than 30 mmHg or diastolic BP 15mmHg from the baseline.

c. Risk factors for developing high blood pressure

i. Modifiable risk factors

- Being overweight or Obese
- Not being physically active
- Unhealthy diet eg High salt diet & diet rich in saturated fats
- Drinking alcohol
- Smoking

ii. Non-Modifiable risk factors

- Old age over 65 years
- Genetics (family history)
- Co - existing diseases such as Diabetes Melitus and/ or kidney disease

d. Symptoms

Most people with hypertension don't feel any symptoms but very high blood pressure (usually 180/120 mmHg) can cause someone to experience the following symptoms.

- Headache
- Blurred vision
- Chest pain
- Dizziness
- Difficulty in breathing



- Nausea & vomiting
- Confusion
- Buzzing in the ears

e. Prevention of developing high blood pressure

Life style modification can help lower blood pressure and can help anyone with hypertension.

The following lifestyle changes can help prevent and lower high blood pressure.

i. The Dos

- Eat more vegetables and fruits
- Be more physically active which can include walking, running, swimming, dancing or lifting weight.
 - ✓ This means get atleast 150 minutes per week (30 minutes per day X 5 days) of moderate intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes per week (15 minutes per day X 5 days).
 - ✓ Do strength building exercises 2 or more days each week.
- Loss weight if you're overweight or obese.
- Take medicines as prescribed by your health care professional.
- Keep appointments with your health care professional.
- Manage other medical conditions
- Reduce and manage stress

ii. The Donts

- Don't eat too much salty food (try to stay under 2 grams per day)
- Don't eat foods high in saturated fats
- Don't smoke or use tobacco
- Don't drink alcohol (or limit 1 drink daily max for women and 2 for men)
- Don't miss or share medication