



KNOW IT. OWN IT. CONTROL IT.

YOUR 7-DAY BLOOD PRESSURE TOOLKIT

Know your numbers. Build practical habits. Bring your questions and your readings to your care team.

FREE • PRINTABLE • SHAREABLE



01 / START HERE

Your health, in your hands

A seven-day companion for understanding blood pressure and taking action.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Almost 60 million U.S. women (45.7%) have high blood pressure or take medicine for it. Fewer than 1 in 4 women with hypertension have it controlled.

01 CHECK

Measure morning and evening, and record both readings.

02 ACT

Try one practical heart-health action each day.

03 CONNECT

Bring your log and questions to your next health visit.

Use this toolkit during National Women's Blood Pressure Awareness Week, October 18–24, 2026, and keep using what works for you.

02 / UNDERSTAND

Know your numbers

Blood pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury (mm Hg). Either number can place you in a higher category.

SYSTOLIC	DIASTOLIC	WHAT IT MEANS
NORMAL Below 120	Below 80	Keep healthy habits
ELEVATED 120–129	Below 80	Build habits now
STAGE 1 130–139	80–89	Talk with your clinician
STAGE 2 140 or higher	90 or higher	Care plan + lifestyle
SEVERE Higher than 180	Higher than 120	Recheck promptly

MY READING:

/

MY GOAL:

/

03 / MEASURE ACCURATELY

Check it right at home

A correctly sized, validated upper-arm cuff and consistent technique help you get useful readings.

BEFORE YOU START

For 30 minutes, avoid caffeine, smoking, alcohol, food and exercise. Empty your bladder. Sit quietly for five minutes before measuring.



SIT

1

Back supported, feet flat, legs uncrossed.

POSITION

2

Rest your arm on a table at chest height.

CUFF

3

Place a snug cuff on bare skin, not a sleeve.

BE STILL

4

Do not talk or use your phone.

REPEAT

5

Take two readings, 1–2 minutes apart.

RECORD

6

Check morning and evening at consistent times.

Find validated monitors at validatebp.org. A single high reading is a reason to recheck, not panic. Discuss your pattern with your care team.

04 / YOUR TRACKING WORKSHEET

My 7-day blood pressure log

Write down both readings each morning and evening. Record medicines and anything that may have affected your readings.

DAY	DATE	AM 1	AM 2	PM 1	PM 2	MEDS?	NOTES
1		___/___	___/___	___/___	___/___		
2		___/___	___/___	___/___	___/___		
3		___/___	___/___	___/___	___/___		
4		___/___	___/___	___/___	___/___		
5		___/___	___/___	___/___	___/___		
6		___/___	___/___	___/___	___/___		
7		___/___	___/___	___/___	___/___		

Note stress, sleep, salty meals, symptoms or missed doses. Bring the completed page to your appointment. Ask your clinician what readings should prompt a call.

05 / SEVEN DAYS

One action each day

Choose small, doable actions. Check each box when complete.

01

KNOW IT

Get a reading and start your log.

☐

02

KNOW YOUR RISK

Write down family and pregnancy-related history.

☐

03

EAT FOR YOUR HEART

Compare sodium on three foods; swap one.

☐

04

MOVE MORE

Walk 10 minutes or break up sitting.

☐

05

REST & RESET

Try screen-free time and slow breathing.

☐

06

OWN YOUR CARE

Review medicines and write questions.

☐

07

CONTROL IT TOGETHER

Share your tracker; invite another woman to check.

☐

06 / WOMEN'S HEALTH

Blood pressure across life stages

Pregnancy, birth control and menopause can change cardiovascular risk. Bring your history into the conversation.

HORMONAL BIRTH CONTROL

Some methods can raise blood pressure. Ask for a check when starting or switching.

PREGNANCY

High blood pressure and preeclampsia require prompt attention. Report severe headaches, vision changes or sudden swelling.

AFTER BIRTH

Blood pressure problems may begin or persist postpartum. Seek urgent care for severe headache, vision changes, chest pain or breathing trouble.

YEARS AFTER PREGNANCY

Prior high blood pressure or preeclampsia raises later heart and stroke risk. Tell every new clinician.

PERIMENOPAUSE & MENOPAUSE

Check blood pressure regularly and ask about cholesterol and blood sugar.

If pregnant or recently postpartum, tell the care team: "I am pregnant" or "I gave birth on [date]."

07 / EVERYDAY HABITS

Build a heart-health routine

You do not have to change everything at once. Choose habits you can sustain.

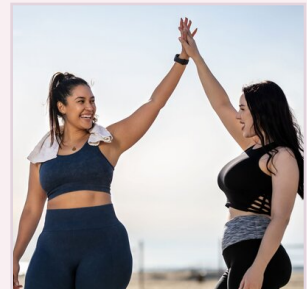
EAT FOR YOUR HEART

Build meals around vegetables, fruit, beans, whole grains, nuts and seeds. Compare sodium on labels. Try herbs, garlic, onion and citrus for flavor. Low-cost staples include oats, lentils and frozen vegetables.



MOVE MORE, SIT LESS

Walk after meals, break up long periods of sitting, and choose movement you enjoy. Dancing, gardening, chair exercise and walking with a friend all count.



REST AND MANAGE STRESS

Aim for a consistent sleep schedule. Take breaks from screens and news. Try slow breathing, prayer, stretching or time outdoors. Put your own checkups on the calendar.



08 / MEDICINES

Your care team is your partner

Do not stop, skip or change prescribed blood pressure medicines without speaking with your clinician or pharmacist.

MAKE YOUR ROUTINE EASIER

Take medicine with an established daily habit. Set an alarm or use a pill organizer. Request refills early. Ask about 90-day supplies and lower-cost alternatives if needed. Report side effects.



QUESTIONS FOR YOUR NEXT VISIT

- ☐ What is my personal blood pressure goal?
- ☐ How often should I check at home, and when should I call?
- ☐ Does my pregnancy history, birth control or menopause affect my risk?
- ☐ Could my medicines or supplements raise blood pressure?
- ☐ Should we check cholesterol, blood sugar or kidney function?
- ☐ What is one change that would help me most?

09 / ACT PROMPTLY

When to get help

Know the warning signs. Emergency symptoms deserve immediate attention.

CALL 911

If blood pressure is higher than 180/120 AND you have chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, numbness, weakness, vision changes or trouble speaking, call 911. Do not drive yourself.

STROKE: F.A.S.T.

Face drooping • Arm weakness • Speech difficulty • Time to call 911.

HEART ATTACK SYMPTOMS IN WOMEN

May include breathlessness, nausea, unusual fatigue, or pain in the back, jaw, neck or arm. Call 911.

If a reading remains higher than 180/120 on recheck without symptoms, contact your clinician immediately for guidance. If you cannot reach them, seek urgent medical advice.

10 / FIND CARE

You deserve access to care

Keep this resource, share it, and bring your blood pressure record to your next appointment.

FIND A COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Community health centers serve people regardless of ability to pay. Find a nearby center at findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov.

OTHER WAYS TO GET SUPPORT

Ask local pharmacies about blood pressure checks. The HHS Office on Women's Health Helpline provides information at 1-800-994-9662, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET.

STAY CONNECTED WITH IAWH HEALTH

Visit iawh.org and subscribe to the IAWH Health Journal for more women's health information and practical tools.



11 / FURTHER READING

Sources & trusted resources

This educational toolkit is not a substitute for professional diagnosis, treatment or emergency care.

01 HHS Office on Women's Health
National Women's Blood Pressure Awareness Week 2026
womenshealth.gov/nwbpaw

02 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Measuring Your Blood Pressure; High Blood Pressure Facts
cdc.gov/high-blood-pressure/measure

03 American Heart Association
Understanding Blood Pressure Readings
[heart.org / Understanding Blood Pressure Readings](https://heart.org/Understanding-Blood-Pressure-Readings)

04 American Heart Association / ACC
2025 High Blood Pressure Guideline
[professional.heart.org / 2025 Guideline](https://professional.heart.org/2025-Guideline)

05 NIH National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
DASH Eating Plan
nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dash-eating-plan

06 American Medical Association
Validated Blood Pressure Device Listing
validatebp.org