

# High Blood Pressure without Diagnosis of Hypertension

## What Is It?

- Blood pressure changes from minute to minute and is affected by many things: rest, activity, temperature, diet, emotions, medications, lying or sitting down, etc.
- High blood pressure can occur even if you don't have hypertension, or consistent high blood pressure.
- Teens and young adults can have high blood pressure, though it is much more common in older people.
- High blood pressure is when the systolic ( peak of the heartbeat) is over 140 and the diastolic (heart is resting between beats) is over 90 for those 18 and over.
- Family history of high blood pressure or having a higher than normal blood pressure as a young person, puts you at greater risk for hypertension.
- Normal blood pressure when you are over 18 is 120/80 or less.
- Your health care provider will probably take your blood pressure several times over several days before diagnosing hypertension.



## Signs And Symptoms:

- There are often no signs of high blood pressure, so it is called "The Silent Killer".
- Severe hypertension can cause swelling, headaches, dizziness, nosebleeds, visual changes and nausea.
- High blood pressure that is not treated can cause: stroke, heart disease, kidney failure, vision loss, hardening of the arteries, etc.
- Often people who smoke, drink alcohol, are overweight, don't exercise, have a lot of stress and eat an unhealthy diet are increasing their risk of having high blood pressure.

## What Can I Do?

- If you have any severe symptoms, as above, see you health care provider right away!
- If you have a family history, are pregnant, overweight/obese, drink or smoke a lot and do no exercise, have your blood pressure taken at least once a year.
- If your health care provider prescribes medicine for high blood pressure, take it regularly, even if your blood pressure is normal. Wait for your health care provider to tell you to stop taking or change doses.
- Talk to a Registered Dietitian about a diet to help control or prevent high blood pressure. Often eating foods from all the food groups, eating less salt and sugar and getting regular exercise can greatly decrease your risk.
- See Food Fitness First website for further information on high blood pressure.
  - maintaining a normal weight, quit smoking, less use of alcohol, stress management.

