

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Blood Pressure**
- **Tips**
- **Chili Powder**
- **Exercise Class**

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## What is Blood Pressure?

### What is Blood Pressure?

Blood pressure is the force of blood exerting pressure against the artery walls as the heart pumps. The measurement of blood pressure is read with two numbers, the systolic and the diastolic pressure. The systolic blood pressure is the pressure obtained while the heart is pumping. The diastolic blood pressure is the pressure obtained while the heart is at rest. These two numbers are usually reported like this: 125/74 mmHg. If the blood pressure is read, it would be stated like this: "The blood pressure reading is 125 over 74 millimeters of mercury". Blood pressure is variable and changes over the lifetime. There are different normal ranges of blood pressure based on the phase of life a person is in. For instance, a newborn has a very different blood pressure than a 50 year old.



### How is Blood Pressure measured?

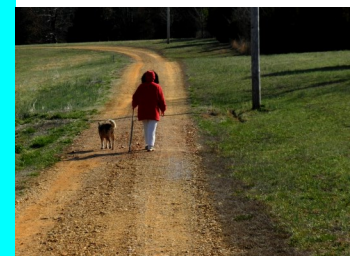
Blood pressure can be measured from the outside of the body or the inside. When individuals are really sick and hospitalized, sometimes a catheter is placed in the artery to measure the blood pressure. This may also be done during some procedures so an accurate and continuous blood pressure reading can be obtained. The catheter is usually placed in the artery in the wrist or the groin.

The more common way to measure blood pressure is with a blood pressure cuff from the outside of the body. A manual blood pressure is generally more accurate but this requires training, a manual blood pressure cuff, and a stethoscope. Therefore, most individuals will use an automated blood pressure cuff. These can be purchased at most large stores (Wal-Mart, Target etc.) and many pharmacies. The cuff that fits on the bicep is preferred although many people will use one that fits on the wrist because it is smaller. The most accurate blood pressure will be taken in a seated position, both feet on the floor, with arm and back support. If the bladder needs to be emptied, then do this before the blood pressure is obtained if possible. Any clothing that is tight or restricted on the arm should be removed. (2,7.....Cont. Page 3).

## Tip of the Month

### Tips for a Healthy Blood Pressure:

1. Keep sodium intake <2300mg per day for normal individuals and < 1500mg if high blood pressure is already present.
2. Eat fresh fruits and vegetables.
3. Avoid fast food and limit processed foods. These foods may raise your blood pressure.
4. Cook at home instead of eating out. This will help with both sodium intake and maintaining a healthy weight.
5. Limit alcohol intake.
6. Get off the couch. Go for a walk or bike ride. (6).





Recipe from  
"Breaking the Salt  
Habit" by Erik  
Williams. (1).

## Classic Chili Powder (Low Sodium)

### Ingredients:

1. 3 Tbsp. Paprika
2. 2 tsp. Oregano
3. 1 1/2 tsp. Cumin
4. 1 tsp. Turmeric
5. 1 1/2 tsp. Garlic Powder
6. 1/2 tsp. Cayenne Pepper

### Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a small container.
2. Use in place of store bought chili powder.

### Nutrition Info

Yields 15 servings  
1 Serving = 1 tsp.

Calories: 7  
Total Fat: <1g  
Sat Fat: 0g  
Cholesterol: 0mg  
Potassium: 44mg  
Carbohydrates: 1g  
Protein: <1g  
Fiber: <1g  
Sugar: <1g  
Sodium: <1mg

**Quote of the Month:** "We generate fears while we sit. We overcome them with action." Dr. Henry Link

## Did you Know?

Did you know that there may be some exercise programs or gym memberships that could be free to you? The first one which many people are familiar with if they have a heart history is cardiac rehab. Cardiac rehab is available in many cities where there is a hospital or outpatient cardiology services. Cardiac rehab can be covered by insurance with a physician order if one of the following diagnosis is present: A heart attack in the last year, coronary artery bypass surgery, a valve repair or replacement surgery, stable angina (chest pain), a heart or lung transplant, or stable chronic heart failure. Cardiac rehab is a wonderful setting for exercise. It is well supervised and individuals are

monitored closely while they are exercising. There is extensive education that is provided and also a good support system.

Another exercise program that might be free through insurance is Silver Sneakers. This is a fitness program for people 65 years of age or older. It includes a free gym membership and free Silver Sneakers group fitness classes. It is available to over 13.5 million people in over 13,000 locations. To find out if you are eligible, visit their website at [www.silversneakers.com](http://www.silversneakers.com) and click on the check eligibility box in the right hand corner. In addition to these programs, many cities have exercise classes, especially geared to older adults. Check out and see if there is a council on aging in your city. These facilities can provide resources to you that may include free fitness classes as well. (8,9).



For an accurate blood pressure reading, the room should be quiet and the individuals involved should not be talking. Once these items are completed, then an accurate blood pressure reading can be obtained. So the blood pressure is high, now what? Let's take a look at things that can raise the blood pressure.

### **So what things can raise the blood pressure?**

1. Certain Medications (Decongestants containing pseudoephedrine or phenylephrine, anti-inflammatories such as Aleve, Mobic, Celebrex, Ibuprofen, some antidepressants, birth control, stimulant drugs such as Ritalin, many herbal supplements).
2. Alcohol
3. Being overweight or obese
4. Salt
5. Stress/Pain
6. Lack of physical activity
7. Smoking



This is not an extensive list but these are some common offenders. These are also things or behaviors that can be changed. Losing weight, watching sodium intake, exercising, etc. can all lower blood pressure. In some instances, medication for high blood pressure may even be able to be stopped after appropriate lifestyle changes are made.

**What is the most important thing to know about blood pressure?** High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, affects 1 out of every 3 adults over age twenty. This amounts to about 85 million Americans. Nearly 20 percent of people do not even know they have high blood pressure. This is why it is known as the “silent killer”. Many people have no symptoms of high blood pressure. This is why it is so important to have your blood pressure checked. Know your number and keep an eye on it. It can change over time. If left untreated or undiagnosed, it can lead to heart failure, heart attack, stroke, and kidney disease. Many times these bad outcomes can be prevented with treatment and lifestyle changes. (2,3,4,5).