



## **High Blood Pressure Fact Sheet**

### **What is High Blood Pressure?**

High blood pressure also called hypertension, means the pressure of the blood in your blood vessels is higher than it should be. Blood pressure normally rises and falls throughout the day. But if it stays high for a long time, it can damage your heart and lead to health problems. About 9 of 10 Americans will develop high blood pressure during their lifetimes.

### **Signs & Symptoms**

High blood pressure has no warning signs or symptoms, and many people do not know they have it. The only way to know if you have it is to measure your blood pressure. Then you can take steps to control it if it is too high.

### **What You Should Know About High Blood Pressure**

- Prehypertension increases your risk of high blood pressure.
- Tobacco use increases your risk for high blood pressure.
- High blood pressure increases your risk for getting type 2 diabetes.
- Type 2 diabetes increase your risk for high blood pressure.
- Drinking too much alcohol can raise your blood pressure.
- Being overweight can increase your risk for high blood pressure.
- A diet that is too high in sodium and too low in potassium can increase your risk for high blood pressure.
- Family history of high blood pressure increases your risk for getting high blood pressure.
- Your risks for high blood pressure increase with age.
- African Americans develop high blood pressure more often than whites, Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders, American Indians, or Alaska Natives.

**Source:** [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

*This project is conducted in partnership with the Black Women's Health Imperative through a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services.*