

Understanding Blood Pressure

During your medical assessment today, your blood pressure reading was outside the normal range.

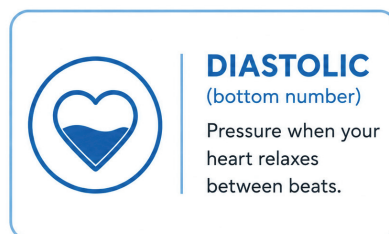
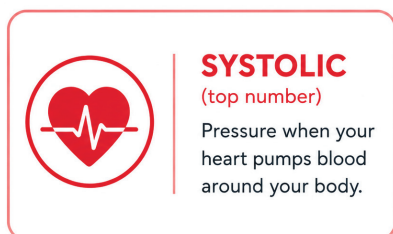
Blood pressure naturally changes throughout the day and can be affected by factors such as stress, recent physical activity, caffeine, illness and some medications. One reading alone does not usually confirm a medical condition.

This leaflet explains what your result may mean and provides general guidance on managing your blood pressure and when to seek further medical advice.

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries as your heart pumps blood around your body.

Your reading is shown as two numbers:



Understanding your reading

Your blood pressure reading can provide a useful indication of your cardiovascular health at the time of your medical assessment.

The guide below shows the general blood pressure ranges used by healthcare professionals to help interpret your reading. Your reading should always be considered alongside your health, medical history and any symptoms you may be experiencing.

A single reading outside the normal range does not necessarily mean you have a medical condition. Blood pressure naturally changes throughout the day and can be influenced by factors such as stress, physical activity, caffeine, illness and some medications.



Remember

A single blood pressure reading is only a snapshot in time. If your reading today was outside the normal range, further checks over time may be recommended to confirm whether any follow-up is needed.

Turn over for practical guidance on high and low blood pressure and simple lifestyle measures that may help.

High blood pressure (140/90 mmHg or above)

If your blood pressure remains high over time, it can increase your risk of heart disease, stroke and kidney disease.

You can help reduce your blood pressure by:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Being physically active
- Eating plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Reducing the amount of salt in your diet
- Limiting alcohol consumption
- Stopping smoking
- Getting enough good quality sleep
- Managing stress where possible

Low blood pressure (below 90/60 mmHg)

Low blood pressure is often not a cause for concern, particularly if you feel well. However, it can sometimes cause dizziness or fainting and may be linked to dehydration, certain medications or an underlying medical condition.

To help reduce symptoms:

- Stand up slowly from sitting or lying down
- Drink enough water to stay well hydrated
- Eat regular, balanced meals
- Avoid standing still for long periods
- Take extra care when getting out of bed
- Avoid excessive alcohol consumption

When should I seek medical advice?

Please arrange an appointment with your GP if:

- you continue to record high blood pressure readings
- you experience repeated dizziness or fainting
- you develop symptoms such as chest pain, severe headaches, shortness of breath or changes to your vision
- you have any concerns about your blood pressure or your symptoms

Seek urgent medical attention immediately if your blood pressure is 180/110 mmHg or higher *, or if you experience severe chest pain, sudden weakness, difficulty speaking, severe shortness of breath or any symptoms that could indicate a medical emergency.

** Network Rail PTS medical standard: a blood pressure reading of 180/110 mmHg or above requires urgent referral.*

Remember

Most people with a blood pressure reading outside the normal range do not require urgent treatment. Your healthcare professional may recommend repeat measurements or advise you to discuss your result with your GP.

This leaflet provides general guidance following your workplace medical assessment and does not replace advice from your GP or another qualified healthcare professional. Information based on current NHS guidance. Review date: July 2026.



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