



# Blood pressure



## The facts!

High blood pressure is one of the most common disorders affecting the heart and blood vessels.

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have high blood pressure but do not know it.

It is important to ask your doctor, nurse or Aboriginal Health Worker to check your blood pressure.

## What is blood pressure?

Blood is carried around the body in tubes called blood vessels. The pumping of the heart keeps blood moving through the blood vessels.

Blood pressure is the measurement of the pressure in the walls of bigger blood vessels called arteries.

High blood pressure is also called hypertension. It can be very dangerous if left untreated.

## What is normal blood pressure?

Blood pressure varies from moment to moment. It is affected by many factors including breathing, body position, emotional state, exercise, sleep, medicines and alcohol (grog).

Normal blood pressure is less than 130/80 mmHg. Talk with your doctor about what your blood pressure should be.

You need more than one high reading to confirm you have high blood pressure.





## What causes high blood pressure?

- Family history
- Being overweight
- Poor diet
- Too much salt
- Drinking too much alcohol (grog)
- Not exercising
- Cigarette smoking
- Kidney problems

## What are the risks of high blood pressure?

- Heart disease
- Heart failure
- Stroke
- Kidney disease or failure
- Eye problems

## How to help prevent or manage high blood pressure

- Stop smoking
- Eat healthy foods
- Reduce your salt intake
- Drink less alcohol (grog)
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Increase physical activity – aim for 30 minutes or more of moderate intensity physical activity every day of the week
- Have your blood pressure checked regularly
- Take your medications as directed by your doctor

Visit your health worker, Aboriginal Medical Service or doctor and get your blood pressure checked today.

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