

# Blood Pressure— You're in Control:



**Work with your Primary Care Doctor**



**Change your behavior**



**Learn all you can**

## High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure ( also called hypertension) increases your chance of having a heart attack, heart failure, stroke, chronic kidney disease (CKD), and other life-threatening illnesses. Anyone can get it and as you get older the likelihood of your developing high blood pressure increases. If you are overweight or obese or if you have diabetes, the odds are even higher.

| Blood Pressure Levels            |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Normal</b>                    | Systolic: less than 120 mmHg<br>Diastolic: less than 80 mmHg |
| <b>At Risk (Prehypertension)</b> | Systolic: 120–139 mmHg<br>Diastolic: 80–89 mmHg              |
| <b>High</b>                      | Systolic: 140 mmHg or higher<br>Diastolic: 90 mmHg or higher |

Top Number

Bottom Number

**Virginia Coordinated care for the Uninsured Program (VCC)**  
 1200 E. Marshall St.  
 Gateway Building  
 Richmond, VA 23298



## **Steps to maintain a normal Blood Pressure:**

- **Stay Active!**

Aim for 30-60 min. of activity 5 days a week.

- **Reduce Stress**

Stress can cause spikes in blood pressure – relax!

- **Don't Smoke**

Smoking harms heart health.

- **Limit Alcohol Usage**

No more than 2 drinks a day for men, less than 1 for women.

- **Limit Salt Intake (less than 1,500 mg per day)**

- You can take the salt shaker off the table.

You can use herbs and spices to flavor instead of salt.

- **Follow a Health Diet**

- Increase fruits and vegetables.

- Increase low fat/fat free dairy products.

- Limit lean meats (less than 6 oz. per day); try to include several meatless meals a week!

- Eat whole grain: brown rice and whole wheat pasta and bread are great.

- Look up healthy eating plans like the DASH diet, specifically engineered to lower blood pressure.