



Blood pressure is a measure of the force of blood against the walls of the arteries. A person's blood pressure rises and falls throughout the day, but when it stays elevated over time, it is called high blood pressure, or hypertension. High blood pressure is cause for concern because it increases the risk for heart disease, stroke and other serious illnesses.

ask your pharmacist

Q: *Can I take my blood pressure at home?*

A: Yes you can, by using a home blood pressure monitor. But keep these guidelines in mind:

- Demonstrate your technique to a health care provider, such as your CVS pharmacist, to ensure that you are using the proper technique.
- Avoid caffeine and cigarettes for at least 30 minutes before taking a measurement.
- Rest quietly for five minutes before testing.
- Sit in an upright position with your legs and ankles uncrossed and your back supported.
- Wait at least two minutes before repeating a measurement.

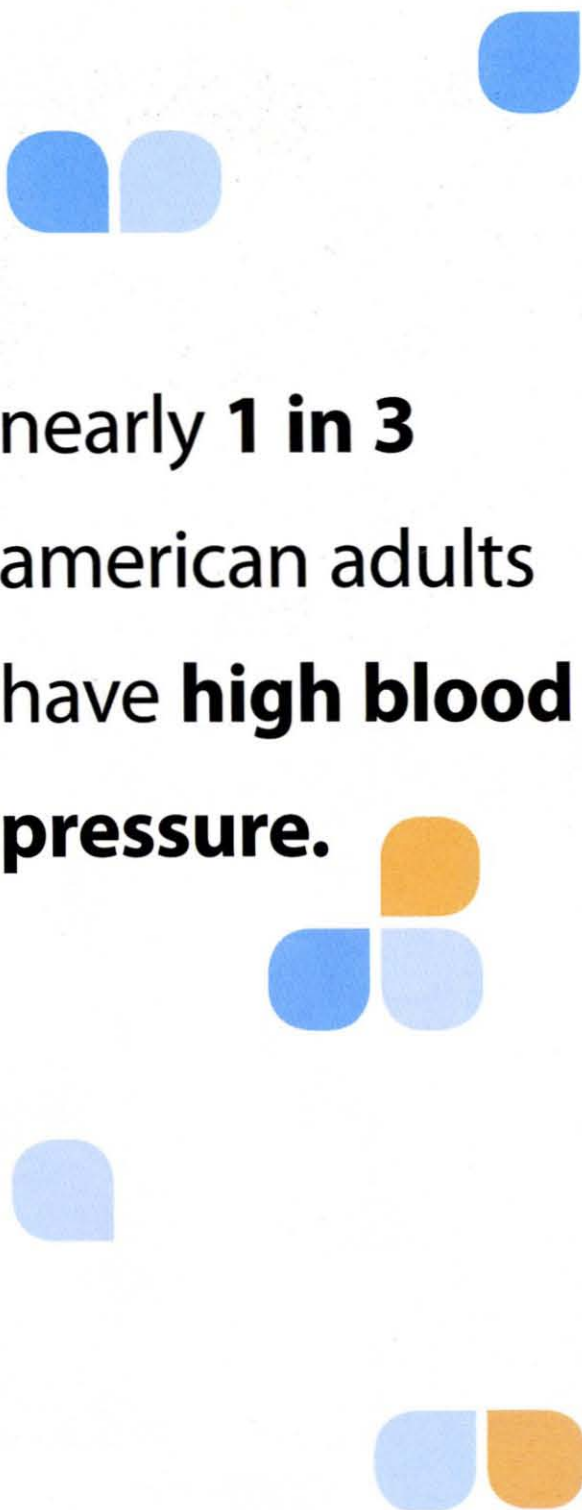
talk to your CVS pharmacist
about your blood pressure or
any other health-related topics.

high blood pressure



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CVS/pharmacy



nearly **1 in 3**
american adults
have **high blood**
pressure.

Symptoms of High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure has no obvious signs or symptoms. It is often called "the silent killer," and a blood pressure measurement is the only way to detect it. A blood pressure monitor is all a doctor or nurse needs to check your pressure.

blood pressure guidelines

good	borderline high risk	high risk
120/80 mmHg or lower	120/80 mmHg - 139/89 mmHg	140/90 mmHg or higher

Treating High Blood Pressure with Medications

Many of the drugs used to control high blood pressure are called antihypertensives.

Common antihypertensives include:

- diuretics, which rid the body of excess fluid and salt
- beta blockers, which decrease the heart's need for blood and oxygen, easing its workload
- drugs that reduce blood pressure by preventing your blood vessels from constricting
- medications that relax the muscles in the walls of blood vessels, widening them
- drugs that both reduce heart rate and widen the blood vessels

Treating High Blood Pressure through Diet

The **DASH** diet (**Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension**) is a nonmedical way to fight high

blood pressure. A clinical study that tested the effects of nutrients in food on blood pressure found that elevated blood pressure was reduced in people who followed an eating plan that emphasized fruits, vegetables and low fat dairy foods. A second clinical study, called DASH-Sodium, found that reducing dietary sodium lowered blood pressure in both people who followed the DASH eating plan and those who ate a typical American diet.

You can find **DASH** diet guidelines by visiting the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash.

Staying Healthy with Blood Pressure

- Avoid high-fat, fried and salty foods
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Be physically active
- Limit alcohol
- Quit smoking, and try to avoid secondhand smoke.

pharmacist tips

Decongestants can increase blood pressure and may interfere with blood pressure medication. Ask your CVS pharmacist to help you choose a cold and flu medication that doesn't contain a decongestant.

High blood pressure can run in families. If you're a parent with high blood pressure, check your child's blood pressure every now and then so you can stop damage before it starts.