



**Irish Heart
Foundation**

The National Stroke & Heart Charity



**High blood pressure can silently
damage your heart and other organs**

Get yours checked at your GP or local pharmacy

**BEFORE
DAMAGE
IS DONE**



What is high blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the amount of work your heart must do to pump blood around the body. It is measured as two numbers – the higher number is the pressure as your heart beats and the lower number is the pressure as it rests between beats. A normal blood pressure is less than 120 over 70. If you are diagnosed with high blood pressure, your blood pressure is consistently higher than it should be.

What are the dangers of high blood pressure?

If left untreated, high blood pressure can lead to serious conditions such as heart attack, stroke, heart failure, kidney failure or dementia.

What are the symptoms of high blood pressure?

High blood pressure usually does not have any symptoms. Only a blood pressure check with a healthcare professional will tell you if you have it.

When and where to check your blood pressure

If you are under 40, have your blood pressure checked every 3 years at your GP or local pharmacy. If you are over 40, have it checked at least once a year. Your GP will assess your overall risk of heart disease and stroke and may advise more frequent blood pressure checks if needed. If your blood pressure is high, it will be checked regularly.

How to control blood pressure

The good news is that, once diagnosed, high blood pressure is easily treated. There are many ways to control blood pressure before damage is done. Some people may need medications. The following steps can also help:

- Eating a diet high in fruit and vegetables and low in processed foods
- Cutting down salt
- Keeping cholesterol under control
- Drinking less alcohol
- Being active - at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity 5 days a week
- Keeping a healthy weight and waist size
- Quitting smoking

**For more information about blood pressure
and how to manage it, visit irishheart.ie**



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