

Blood Pressure & Diabetes



Nearly **1 in 3** American adults have high blood pressure.



Adults with diabetes are 2 to 4 times more likely to die from heart disease than adults who do not have diabetes.

About 6 out of 10 of people who have diabetes also have high blood pressure (BP). Uncontrolled diabetes causes sugars to build up in the blood and damage blood vessels. This increases the risk for heart disease. The American Heart Association considers diabetes to be one of the 7 major controllable risk factors for cardiovascular disease. That is why monitoring BP is an important step in diabetes management.

What is blood pressure?

BP is the force of blood flow inside your blood vessels. The result includes two numbers. For example, 120/80, said as “120 over 80.” Both numbers are important.

Systolic Blood Pressure

This is the top number. This is the pressure when your heart beats and pushes blood through the blood vessels.

Diastolic Blood Pressure

This is the bottom number. This is the pressure when the vessels relax between heartbeats.

What do these numbers mean?

High BP, also known as hypertension, is often a silent problem. You will not know you have it unless you have your BP checked. BP should be taken at every provider appointment and at least every year.

Healthy BP	Less than 120 less than 80
Elevated	120-129 less than 80
Hypertension Stage 1	130-139 80-89
Hypertension Stage 2	140 or higher 90 or higher



If the result of BP check is **140/90 or higher**, ask if it can be retaken to be sure. Many factors can affect your BP, such as recent activity, how you are sitting, smoking, caffeine and even a full bladder!

What can I do?

Go to all of your appointments

- Your provider will monitor for any complications, including checking your BP

Complete any ordered tests

- This includes blood tests to check HbA1c and cholesterol, urine tests and eye exams
- Need help with transportation? Contact MeridianComplete (Medicare-Medicaid Plan) at **1-855-323-4578** (TTY users should call **711**), Hours are from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week. On weekends and on state or federal holidays, you may be asked to leave a message. Your call will be returned within the next business day.

Monitor your BP

- This will be checked at every appointment, but talk to your provider to see if home BP monitoring is right for you



- Meridian covers automatic BP cuffs through an in-network **durable medical equipment** provider, such as Healthy Living Medical Supply
- **Ask your provider to call in your prescription**
 - Your provider can call Healthy Living Medical Supply at **1-866-779-8512** (TTY users should call **711**), Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Take any medications that your provider prescribes

- This includes all medications for BP, cholesterol and diabetes
- Talk to your provider or pharmacist if you are unsure about your medication. He or she can answer any questions or concerns you have
- Contact MeridianRx at **1-855-355-8070** (TTY users should call **711**), Monday – Sunday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to find a pharmacy near you and ask about 90-day prescriptions or mail order pharmacy options

Report any new symptoms to your provider right away

- If you don't have an upcoming appointment, call your provider to see if you need to go in sooner

How do I measure my blood pressure?

If your provider decides that you should be checking your BP at home, here are some tips:

- Wait 30 minutes after eating or using caffeine or tobacco products
- Go to the bathroom and empty your bladder
- Rest for 3 to 5 minutes and do not talk
- Sit in a comfortable position, with your legs and ankles uncrossed and your back supported
- Elevate your left arm to the level of your heart. Place it on a table or desk and sit still
- Wrap the cuff around the upper part of your bare arm
 - There should be enough room for you to slip one fingertip under the cuff
 - The cuff should be the right size for you. Not too tight or too loose with velcro secured
- Check the placement of the cuff
 - The bottom edge of it should be 1 inch above the crease of your elbow
- Turn the power on to start the unit and push the button to inflate the cuff and measure your BP

Remember

Talk to your provider about what BP results are okay for you and when you should call the office.

Additional questions?



Contact Member Services at **1-855-323-4578** (TTY users should call **711**), Monday – Sunday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.



Sources: cdc.gov, heart.org, diabetes.org

Other pharmacies/physicians/providers are available in our network.

MeridianComplete is a health plan that contracts with both Medicare and Michigan Medicaid to provide benefits of both programs to enrollees.