

What is high blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the force in the arteries when the heart beats (systolic pressure) and when the heart is at rest (diastolic pressure). It's measured in millimeters of mercury (mm Hg). In children and adolescents, high blood pressure (hypertension) is based on age, weight and height. If the child's blood pressure is greater than 95% of other children of the same age, height, and weight, they are considered to have high blood pressure.

Children and adolescents are considered to have prehypertension if their blood pressure percentile is between 90 and 94. For adolescents, a blood pressure greater than 120/80 is also an indicator of prehypertension.

Uncontrolled high blood pressure can cause damage to organs such as your kidneys and heart. In order to prevent potential health problems, it is important to reduce blood pressure levels as soon as possible.

Recommendations for lowering Blood Pressure

- Eat more fruit and vegetables. Strive for recommended servings each day.
- Meet your daily calcium needs from dairy foods or calcium supplement.

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| Ages: 1-3 | 500mg |
| 4-8 | 800mg |
| 9-13 | 1300mg |
| 14-18 | 1300mg |
- Increase intake of unsalted nuts, seeds and legumes.
 - Try to consume 1/3 cup unsalted almonds, pecans, peanuts or 2 tablespoons of peanut butter 3-4 times per week.
- Increase physical activity. Try to accumulate 30-60 minutes of physical activity each day. Do something you enjoy. Examples of physical activity include: bicycle riding, walking, swimming, skipping, jumping on a trampoline or playing basketball.