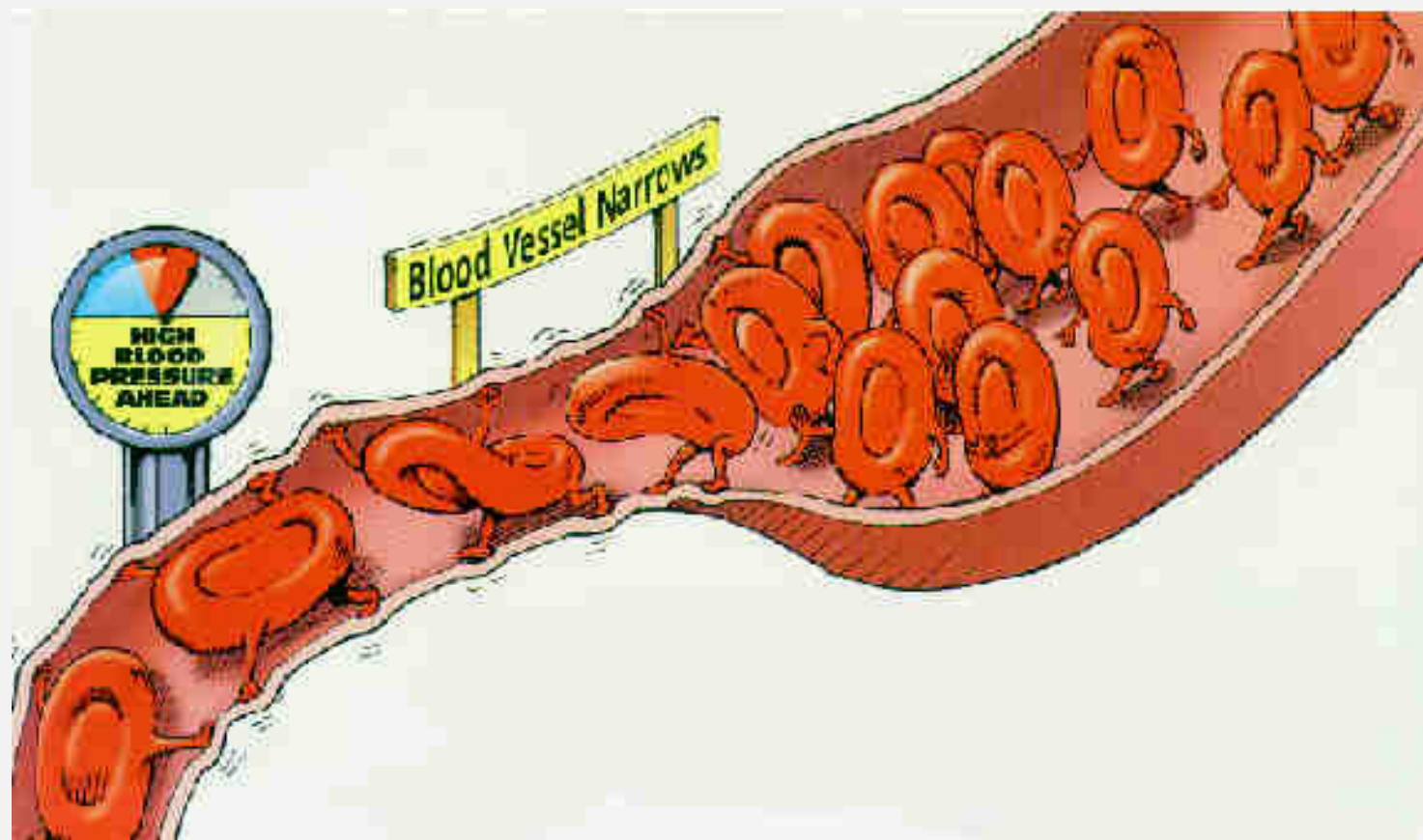


BLOOD



PRESSURE

What is blood pressure?

Your blood pressure is a measure of the pressure or force of the blood against the walls of your blood vessels. The pressure is measured in units called mm Hg (a measurement that is short for millimetres of mercury).

Blood pressure varies considerably throughout the day. It is usually lower while you are at rest, and higher when you are active. Even lying down or standing up can change your blood pressure. Other things, such as your emotions, pregnancy, smoking, the general environment, and medication can change your blood pressure.

If your blood pressure is high when it is measured, you will likely be told to have your blood pressure taken again at a later date. Your doctor will not make a diagnosis based on one high reading alone. By keeping a record of your blood pressure on an ongoing basis, you and your doctor can decide whether or not your blood pressure is in the normal range.

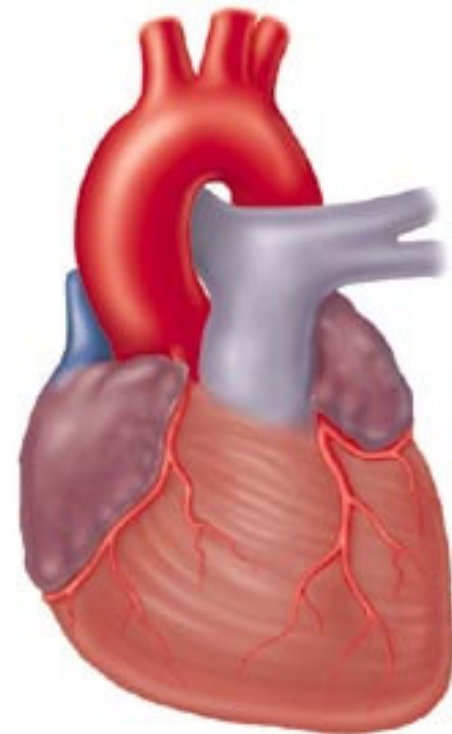
High Blood Pressure

In adults, high blood pressure or *hypertension* is usually defined as a blood pressure that is consistently greater than or equal to 140 mm Hg systolic pressure, or greater than or equal to 90 mm Hg diastolic pressure.

High blood pressure can double or even triple your risk of heart disease, stroke and kidney disease. The only way to find out if you have the condition is to get your blood pressure checked by your doctor or other qualified health professional. Discuss with your doctor how often you should have it checked.

Risk Factors

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Obesity
- Stress
- Excessive alcohol consumption
- Cigarette Smoking



Low Blood Pressure

Blood pressure varies according to your age, gender and what you are doing. Some people naturally have blood pressure that is somewhat lower than the average of 120/80. Low blood pressure is not a disease and is not a problem unless it causes symptoms such as dizziness or fainting.

Common causes of hypotension are:

- Shock
- Stress or trauma
- Sitting or standing up suddenly (orthostatic hypotension)
- Stimulation of the vagus nerve that controls heart rate (vasovagal syncope or fainting, in which blood pools in the legs)
- Allergic reaction to drugs
- Anaphylaxis (a life-threatening allergic response, such as allergies to peanuts, shell fish or bee stings)
- Dehydration

Blood Pressure Q & A

Q Why is the doctor's reading different from the reading taken at home?

A It is possible for blood pressure to increase over reading taken at home due to anxiety and tension.

Q The blood pressure reading is always different.

A Your blood pressure changes constantly. Blood pressure fluctuates from day to day and minute to minute according to your body's needs. These fluctuations are completely normal. For example, when you are exercising or angry your blood pressure increases, but when you are relaxing or sleeping your blood pressure decreases.

High blood pressure can double or even triple your risk of heart disease and stroke and increases the risk of kidney disease. If you have high blood pressure, you must take steps to control it. Controlling your blood pressure can:

- *Reduce your risk of stroke by at least 40%.*
- *Reduce your risk of heart attack by at least 10%.*

Help yourself to some of the blood pressure information!

Brought to you

by:



Resources:



<http://www.heartandstroke.ca>

Heart Disease, Stroke and Stress

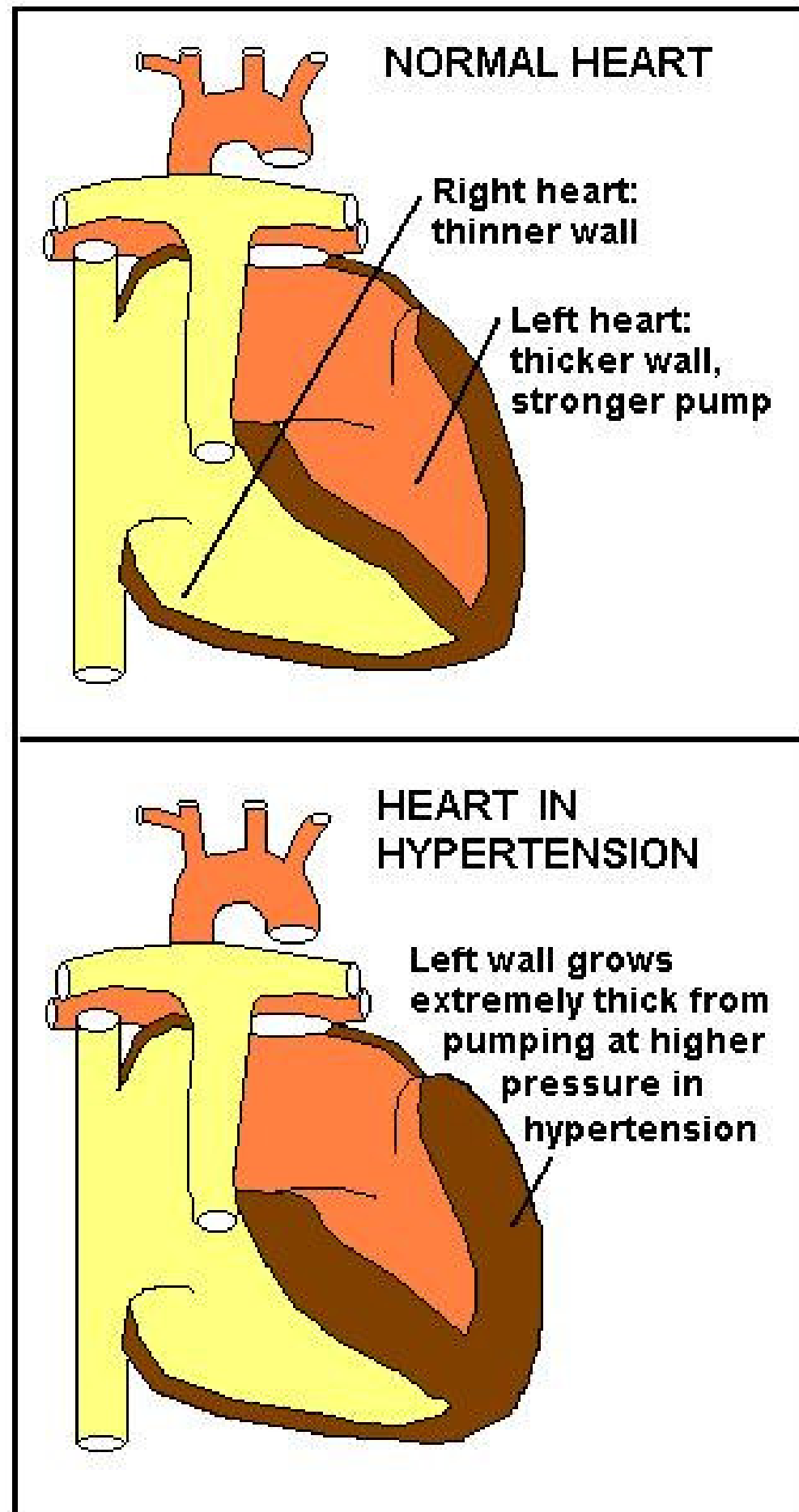
Preliminary evidence suggests that stress may contribute to the development of heart disease and stroke. It is thought that certain individuals with high levels of stress or prolonged stress may:

- Have higher blood cholesterol;
- Experience increases in blood pressure;
- Have blood platelets that are more likely to clot (clump together inside the blood vessels).

Instead of exercising to relieve stress, some people respond by overeating, eating unhealthy foods, excessive alcohol consumption or smoking.

Becoming aware of your stressors and learning how to effectively deal with them will enable you to get on the right track for a healthier lifestyle.

“Each year, about 16,000 Canadians die from stroke. Each year, more women than men die from stroke.”



Systolic and Diastolic mean what?

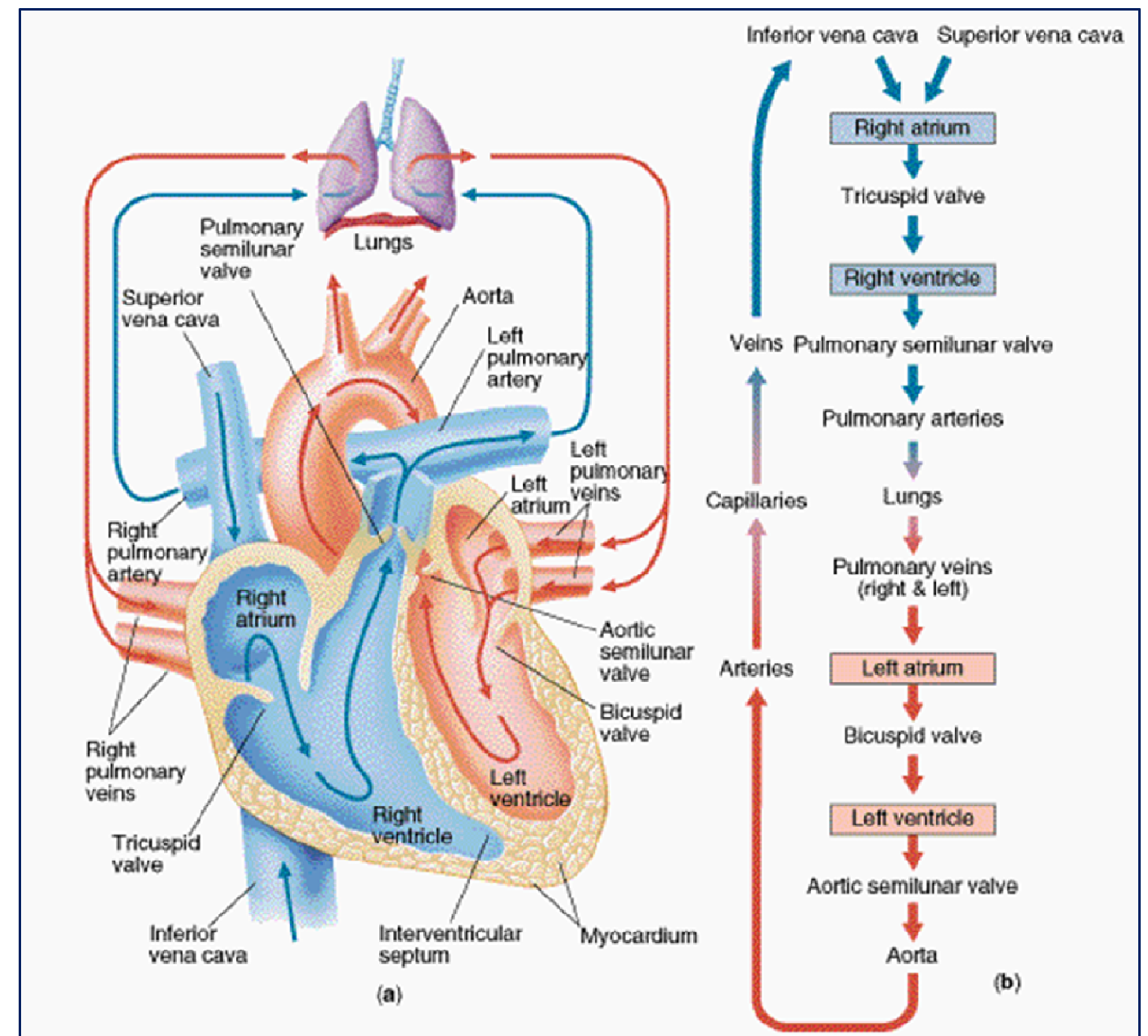
- **Systolic [top number]** pressure represents the pressure when the heart contracts and forces blood into the blood vessels. This is the higher of the two numbers and is usually expressed first (e.g. a blood pressure of 120/70 means the systolic pressure is 120 mm Hg).

120/80

- **Diastolic [bottom number]** pressure represents the pressure when the heart is relaxed. This is the lower of the two numbers and is usually expressed second (e.g. a blood pressure of 120/70 means the diastolic pressure is 70 mm Hg).

High blood pressure has been called the “silent killer”. Get your blood pressure checked regularly and learn more about it. You could save your life.

“After age 55, the risk of stroke doubles every 10 years. A stroke survivor has a 20% chance of having another stroke within 2 years.”



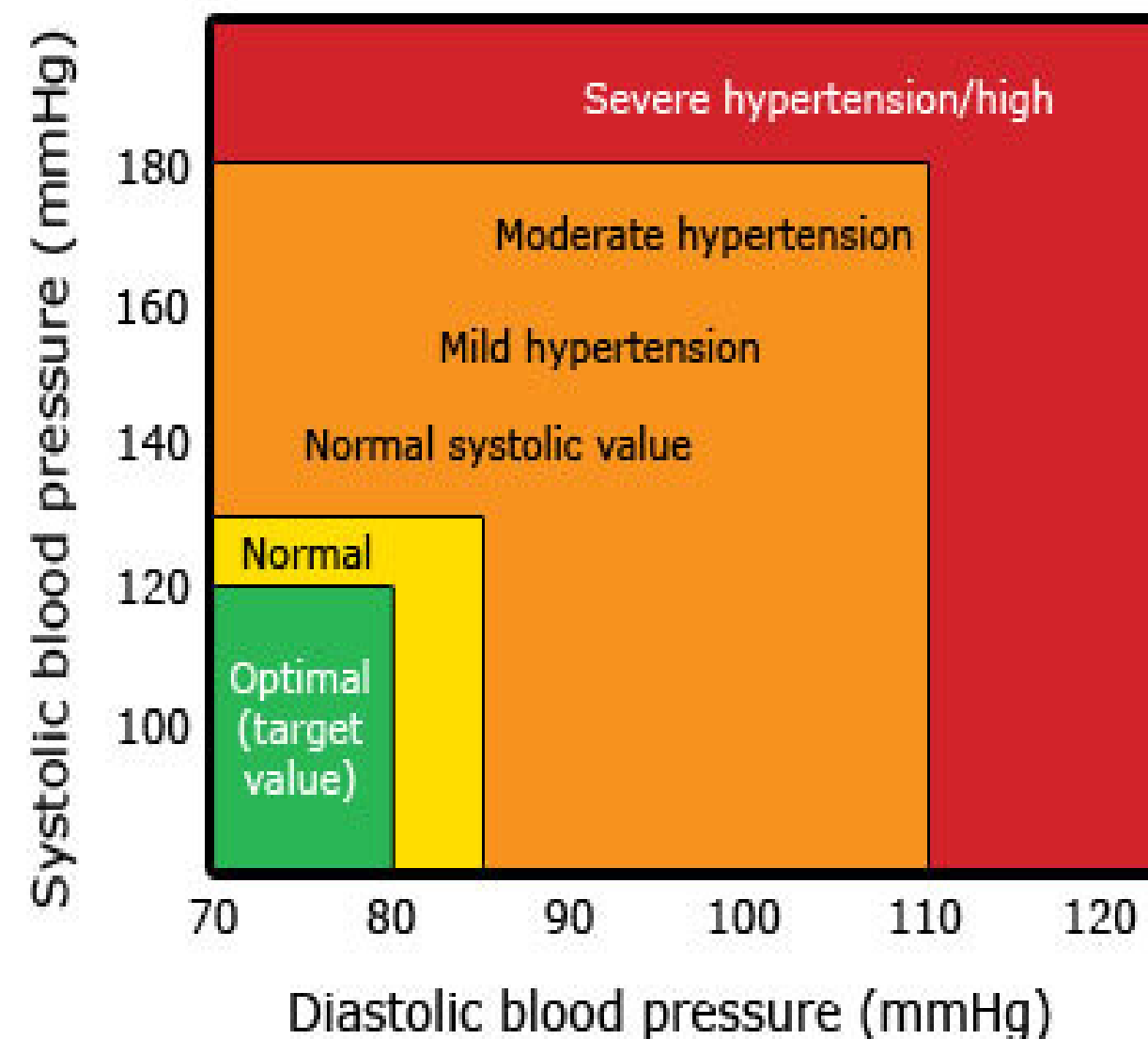
Blood Pressure Cuff

Set-up!

1. Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor and place your arm on a table.
2. Put your left arm through the cuff loop. The tube should run down the centre of arm approximately even with middle finger.
3. Secure the cuff around your arm. Make certain the cuff fits snugly around your arm.
4. Relax your arm and turn your palm upward.

Ready to Measure

1. Press the **START** button and remain still.
2. Inflation stops automatically and measurement is started.
3. Press the **ON/OFF** button to turn the monitor off and record your name and extension on a ballot and your measurement on a personal tracking card.



According to the blood pressure classification by the WHO/ISH.

Lifestyle Solutions

1. Reducing salt in your diet

IF ... you reduce salt intake in your daily diet to no more than 2/3 teaspoon per day (1500 mg of sodium) ... THEN ... you can reduce your systolic blood pressure by around 5.8 mmHg and diastolic pressure by 2.5 mmHg.

2. Weight loss

IF ... you are overweight and lose 4.5 kg (10 lbs) ... THEN ... you can reduce your systolic blood pressure by around 7.2 mmHg and diastolic pressure by 6.9 mmHg.

3. Drinking less alcohol

IF ... you drink excessively and you reduce your consumption to no more than 2 alcoholic drinks per day ... THEN ... you can reduce your systolic blood pressure by around 4.6 mmHg and diastolic pressure by 2.3 mmHg.

4. Physical activity

IF ... you are inactive and you exercise 3 or more times per week, for more than 30 minutes each time ... THEN ... you can reduce your systolic blood pressure by around 10.3mmHg and diastolic pressure by 7.5mmHg.

5. Dietary Approaches

IF ... you eat a healthy diet that includes a lot of fresh fruits and vegetables and low fat dairy products and other food low in saturated and trans fat ... THEN ... you can reduce your systolic blood pressure by around 11.4 mmHg and your diastolic pressure by 5.5 mmHg.

