



# Know your numbers and reduce your risk of heart disease

It's hard to make healthy changes if you don't know you need to make them in the first place. A good first step is having an annual physical with your doctor.

This yearly checkup ensures your blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index (BMI), and blood sugar are in a healthy range. If any of these levels are high, it can increase your risk for heart problems — but knowing what they are also gives you a chance to improve them, if needed, before they become more serious.<sup>1,2</sup>

## 4 numbers to know<sup>1</sup>

**Blood pressure**  
Less than  
**120/80**

**Cholesterol**  
**HDL** ↑ **60**  
**LDL** ↓ **100**

**Body mass index**  
BMI  
**18.5 to 24.9**

**Blood sugar**  
Less than  
**100**



## What the numbers mean

Your doctor will recommend how often to check your heart numbers, based on your risk, and help you find ways to lower them, if needed.



### Blood pressure

A normal blood pressure reading is less than 120/80. This is read as “120 over 80.” High blood pressure raises your risk of heart disease. It doesn’t show any symptoms, so it is important to have your blood pressure checked regularly.



### Cholesterol

Like high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol doesn’t show any symptoms. You should know your levels and ask your doctor how to improve them, if needed. There are two numbers to know:<sup>3</sup>

1. LDL, or low-density lipoprotein, is the “bad” cholesterol. It can stick to your artery walls and cause blockages. Your LDL level should be lower than 100 mg/dL.
2. HDL, or high-density lipoprotein, is the “good” cholesterol. It helps remove LDL from the body to keep your arteries clear. Healthy HDL levels are 60 mg/dL or greater.



### Body mass index (BMI)

BMI measures body fat using your weight and height. If your BMI is considered overweight or obese, it raises your risk of developing heart problems.

- Ideal BMI: 18.5 to 24.9
- Overweight BMI: 25 to 29.9
- Obese BMI: 30 or greater



### Blood sugar

Your blood sugar, or glucose, level helps determine your risk for developing Type 2 diabetes, which increases your risk of heart disease. For the most accurate results, it’s best to fast for eight hours before this test.<sup>4</sup>

- Normal level: lower than 100 mg/dL
- Prediabetic: between 100 and 125 mg/dL
- Diabetic: 126 or greater mg/dL



To find a doctor, use the Sydney<sup>SM</sup> Health mobile app or visit [anthem.com](https://www.anthem.com).

<sup>1</sup> American Heart Association: *Heart-Health Screenings* (accessed July 2022): [heart.org](https://heart.org).  
<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *Prevent Heart Disease* (accessed July 2022): [cdc.gov](https://cdc.gov).  
<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *Getting Your Cholesterol Checked* (accessed July 2022): [cdc.gov](https://cdc.gov).  
<sup>4</sup> American Heart Association: *Symptoms, Diagnosis and Monitoring of Diabetes* (accessed July 2022): [heart.org](https://heart.org).

This information is meant to be educational. It should not be interpreted as medical advice. Please talk to your doctor about changes that may affect your health.

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