

From our Parish Nurse
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BLOOD PRESSURE

WHAT IS IT?

The two numbers of your blood pressure or BP, represent the amount of pressure or force on the walls of your arteries.

The top number or *systolic* pressure represents the amount of force pushing against the walls of your arteries when your heart is squeezing or beating. The bottom number or *diastolic* blood pressure represents the amount of pressure on the walls of your arteries when your heart is at rest and filling for the next heartbeat.

Blood pressure is not static – it changes minute to minute with changes in posture, exercise or activity, stress and / or sleep.

WHAT'S NORMAL?

Normal	is less than 120/80
Pre-Hypertension	120-139/80-89
Hypertension stage 1	140-159/90-99
Hypertension stage 2	160/100
Medical Emergency	180/110



WHY SHOULD I CARE?

- High blood pressure is hard on your pipes or arteries. Untreated high blood pressure damages or scars the inside of your arteries. The scar tissue traps plaque and white blood cells which can form into blockages, blood clots and hardened weakened arteries.
- High blood pressure puts you at risk for a heart attack, congestive heart failure, stroke, aneurysms, kidney disease and blindness.
- High blood pressure **NEGATIVELY** affects your quality of life!
- Blood Pressure can be controlled with life style changes. You have the power to control your health and well-being. Talk with your doctor or parish nurse about positive life style changes you can make.
- Also remember that if caffeine drinks such as coffee, tea, pop, alcohol drinks and certain medications are consumed prior to BP checks it may affect your Blood Pressure and Pulse. Please let me know if you need help. Thanks.