

# HEART HEALTH

## BE SMART AND PROTECT YOUR HEART



**KNOWING YOUR NUMBERS IS AN IMPORTANT START TO PROTECTING YOUR HEART. CHOLESTEROL, BLOOD PRESSURE, AND WAIST MEASUREMENT ARE ALL KEY COMPONENTS AND CAN BE POTENTIAL RISK FACTORS.**

### CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol is a waxy, essential fat-like substance made in the liver and other cells. It is found in certain foods, such as food from animals, like dairy products, eggs, and meat. The body needs some cholesterol in order to function properly but when too much is present, health problems may develop.

Cholesterol	
<b>Total Cholesterol</b>	
Less than 200mg/dL	Optimal
200-239 mg/dL	Borderline
240 mg/dL	High

**Good Cholesterol** is known as High-Density Lipoprotein or HDL. HDL helps protect against heart disease...the higher the number, the better.

**Bad Cholesterol** is known as Low-Density Lipoprotein or LDL. LDL is the main cause of heart disease. It collects in the walls of blood vessels which cause blockages to the arteries. The lower your LDL, the better.

A variety of factors can affect your cholesterol levels; they include...diet, weight, exercise, age and gender, diabetes, heredity, and other causes like medication.

It is recommended that adults over the age of 20 should have their cholesterol levels checked every five years. A Lipid Profile is a test that measures your total cholesterol level, HDL cholesterol, and LDL cholesterol. This is the most effective way to know your risk of heart disease.

Cholesterol	
<b>HDL Cholesterol</b>	
60 mg/dL & above	Helps protect against heart disease
Less than 40 mg/dL	Major heart disease risk factor
<b>LDL Cholesterol</b>	
Less than 100 mg/dL	Optimal
100-129 mg/dL	Near Optimal
130-159 mg/dL	Borderline High
160-189 mg/dL	High
190 mg/dL	Very High

## BLOOD PRESSURE... KEEP IT DOWN

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against blood vessel walls. High blood pressure, or hypertension, is the most common cardiovascular disease. Your blood pressure reading is made up of two numbers, systolic (top number) and diastolic (bottom number). Constant high numbers, either on the top or bottom, put a strain on the heart and blood vessels.

Managing your blood pressure can help you achieve better health now and in the future. Smoking, stress, genetics, lack of physical activity, age, chronic kidney disease, and obesity are some causes of High Blood Pressure.

### SOME TIPS ON LOWERING YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE...

- Lower your sodium intake
- Decrease alcohol consumption
- Add regular exercise into your day

What Do Your Blood Pressure Numbers Mean		
Systolic (Top Number) In hmg	Diastolic (Bottom Number)In hmg	Classification
Less Than 120	Less Than 80	Normal
120-139	80-90	Pre-Hypertension
140-159	90-99	Hypertension, Stage 1
Greater Than 160	Greater Than 100	Hypertension, Stage 2
Greater Than 180	Greater Than 110	Severe Hypertension

## WAIST MEASUREMENT

Waist measurement is a measure of the distance around the abdomen. It is a key indicator of excess midsection fat. A high waist measurement or a greater level of abdominal fat is associated with an increased risk for type-2 diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

High Risk Waist Measurement	
<b>Men</b>	Over 40 inches (120cm)
<b>Women</b>	Over 35 inches (88cm)
Optimal waist measurement for both men and women is 25-34.9	

### Call To Action

- Call Blues On Call Health Coach at 1.888.BLUE.428
- Go to [www.highmarkbcbs.com](http://www.highmarkbcbs.com), select your service region (check your Member ID card) and log on to your Member website to engage in Online Programs.
- Log in to your Member website and select the "Your Coverage" tab to start accessing your member discounts.

