

Know Your Numbers Fact Sheet

In your body, there are many ways to measure your health and whether you are at risk of stroke. A few tests can tell you how hard your heart is working, how clear your arteries are, and whether you are putting too much stress on your body.

To best manage your health, it's important to know your health levels and take active steps to keep them within healthy ranges. Here are numbers you should know.

Body Mass Index and Waist Size



Weight is not the best sign of health because people have different size body frames and may have more muscle than fat. It is more important to know your Body Mass Index and waist size.

- **Body Mass Index (BMI).** BMI is an assessment of a person's health based on his or her weight and height. You can calculate your BMI by multiplying your weight in pounds by 703 and dividing that number by your height in inches squared. There are many online calculators that can determine your BMI. A healthy BMI is between 18.5 and 24.9.
- **Waist size.** It is vital to know your waist size because if you carry more fat around your waist, you are at greater risk for health conditions

To learn your waist size measure the length around your waist at your belly button with a measuring tape. For men, a healthy waist size is less than 40 inches. For women, a healthy waist size is less than 35 inches.

Glucose

Another thing to be aware of is your glucose level, which is the amount of sugar in your blood. Too much glucose or sugar in your blood can damage your body.

Your doctor can determine your glucose level with a simple blood test. Although glucose levels vary, most levels range between 70 and 80 mg/dl.

Glucose levels change during the day based on when we eat. After fasting for eight hours, a normal level is less than 100 mg/dL. Two hours after eating, a normal level is less than 140 mg/dL.

Cholesterol

Cholesterol is measured in four ways: Your LDL (bad) cholesterol, HDL (good) cholesterol, triglycerides, and total cholesterol.

Bad cholesterol can cause plaque, which is a thick, hard deposit that can clog arteries and make them less flexible.

Bad cholesterol can build up and prevent blood from passing through the arteries, which can cause stroke. The lower your LDL cholesterol number, the

lower your risk. An LDL of 190 mg/dL or more is very high.

Good cholesterol takes the bad LDL cholesterol out of your blood and keeps it from building up in your arteries. High levels of HDL cholesterol are best. HDL cholesterol levels greater than 60 mg/dL are good.

Triglycerides come from extra calories, alcohol, or sugars that are stored in fat cells in the body. Normal triglyceride levels vary by gender and age but should be less than 150 mg/dL.

Total cholesterol is found based on your LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, and other lipid components. A healthy total cholesterol score is less than 180 mg/dL.



Blood Pressure

A final number you should know is blood pressure. Blood pressure can be measured at a doctor's office, or at home with



a blood pressure monitor. It is measured with two numbers:

The number on the top is the systolic blood pressure, which is the force of blood putting pressure on your arteries when

your heart beats. A normal systolic blood pressure is below 120.

The number on the bottom is the diastolic blood pressure, which measures the pressure on your arteries between beats. A normal diastolic blood

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pressure number is less than 80.

Knowing your numbers can help you monitor your health and reduce your risk of stroke.

Note: This fact sheet is compiled from general, publicly available information and should not be considered recommended treatment for any particular individual. You should consult your provider about any personal medical concerns.

All publications are reviewed by National Stroke Association's Publications Committee.

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