

Understanding Basic Blood Pressure Control

WATCH THE VIDEO ONLINE!

www.healthjourneysupport.com/cardiology/hbp

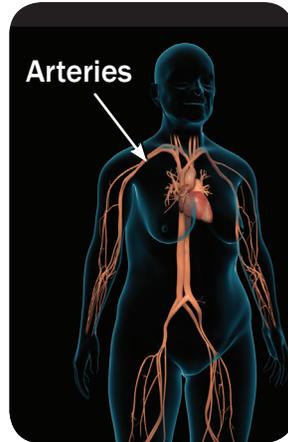
This handout can help you understand how blood pressure is controlled in your body.

What Is Blood Pressure?

Blood pressure is the amount of force caused by blood pressing against the walls of your arteries. It is tightly controlled to ensure sufficient blood reaches all parts of your body.

Your Arteries

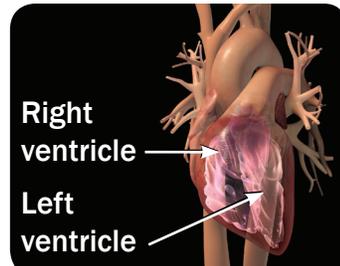
Arteries are blood vessels that carry blood away from your heart to your tissues. This blood supplies your tissues with the oxygen and nutrients they need to function.



Your Heart

In your heart, there are two lower chambers, called ventricles, which contract with each heartbeat.

The right ventricle pushes oxygen-poor blood to your lungs to pick up oxygen and the left ventricle pushes oxygen-rich blood through your arteries to your body.



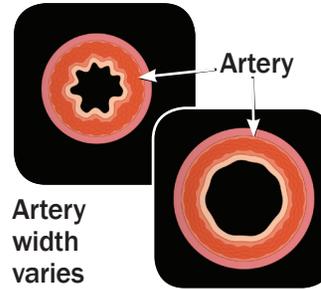
Factors Affecting Blood Pressure

Four main factors affect the pressure on the artery walls:



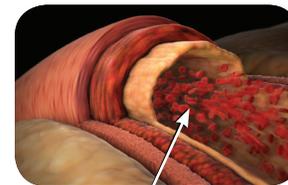
Output and volume

1 Your blood pressure goes up as cardio output increases. Cardio output is the amount of blood your ventricles push out of your heart each minute.



Artery width varies

2 Your blood pressure rises as blood volume, the total amount of blood in your body, increases.



Blood particles in artery

3 Resistance is anything working against the blood flow through your arteries. Resistance is mainly affected by the width of your arteries. Your body is able to increase the width of your arteries to lower your blood pressure. Or it can reduce the width to raise your blood pressure.

4 Viscosity is how thick your blood is. In your blood, more particles, such as proteins and fat, increase viscosity. If your blood is thicker, your blood pressure goes up as your heart works harder to push it through your arteries.



If you have questions about high blood pressure or any medications you have been prescribed, speak with your doctor. It is important to take your medications as directed, and report any side effects you may have.

The information in this handout has been created and peer reviewed by graduate-level medical illustrators, followed by reviews from medical subject experts, either physicians or PhDs on the Nucleus Medical Review Board, to ensure medical accuracy and audience level appropriateness.

The handout is intended to supplement the information you receive from your health care provider and should never be considered personal medical advice. Always contact your health care provider with health questions and concerns.

