



# May Measurement Month – MMM19

**Raised blood pressure is the number 1 contributing risk factor for global death – causing strokes, heart attacks and other cardiovascular complications.**

However, only 50% of people with high blood pressure, know it! The MMM 2019 challenge is simple: For more people to be measured and know their blood pressure.

High blood pressure or hypertension affects over 1 in 4 people in the UK. Hypertension puts extra strain on your body and long term can increase the chance of stroke, heart attack, vascular dementia, heart disease and kidney disease. There are no obvious signs or symptoms of high blood pressure so the only way to find out is to have your blood pressure measured.

The NHS recommends that all adults over 40 have their blood pressure checked at least every 5 years. You can have it measured at various places:

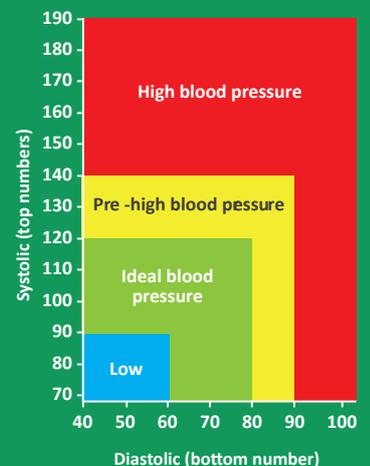
- ▶ GP surgery.
- ▶ Some pharmacies.
- ▶ Workplace health checks.
- ▶ At home with your own machine.

High blood pressure is categorised as readings above 140/90mmHg

Ideal blood pressure is categorised between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg

If you do have high blood pressure you should aim to lower it by making lifestyle changes, these include:

- ▶ **Reducing salt in your diet, don't add salt to cooking or at the table.**
- ▶ **Stop smoking.**
- ▶ **Limit alcohol to less than 14 units per week.**
- ▶ **Keep physically active, aiming for 150 minutes or more of moderate exercise each week.**
- ▶ **Maintain a healthy weight.**



# It's time to get moving,

**May is National Walking Month and with the evenings becoming lighter for longer, this makes it the perfect time to get outside and get walking. Why not set up a challenge to walk another 15 minutes a day in May.**

Being physically active is vital for our health, but often getting started or fitting it into our busy lives becomes an obstacle. A great way to increase your activity level is simply to walk. Walking is free, a full body workout and can be done at any time of the day with no special equipment. Making walking a habit is the best way to ensure that you get the benefit from it. Try parking the car further away from work, the station, school, and the shops and watch the steps add up.

Being on your feet and moving has many benefits including:

- ▶ Lowering blood pressure.
- ▶ Reducing the symptoms of anxiety and depression.
- ▶ Boosts the immune system, reduces stress.
- ▶ Helps to strengthen bones, aids weight management.
- ▶ Lowers the risk of some cancers.
- ▶ Lowers the risk of type 2 diabetes.

These are just some of the reasons why you should try to work in more walking to your daily routine. Just 30 minutes of brisk walking each day is enough to gain these benefits. Use your breaks at work productively by getting away from the work area taking a stroll for 15 minutes, fit in another 15 minutes before or after work and you're well on the way to being healthier happier and more active.

## Tips for a lower salt diet



- Eat less cured meats and fish, they are higher in salt. Instead try alternatives such as a reduced salt unsmoked bacon.
- Add healthier snacks into your diet, fruit, raw carrots or celery. Be careful of the salt content in crackers and crisps.
- Beware of soy sauce, mustard, pickles, mayonnaise and table sauces, as they can be high in salt.
- Watch out for salt content in ready meals, such as pasta sauce. Tomato based sauces often have less salt than cheesy sauces or those containing olives, bacon and ham.

## Quote of the Month

“ All truly great thoughts are conceived by walking. Friedrich Nietzsche ”