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West Virginia University
EXTENSION SERVICE

Know Your Numbers to Count on Good Health

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In addition to knowing your health numbers, knowing how to keep them in the healthy target ranges is even more important. Control these five numbers by controlling your daily health habits.

It is YOUR responsibility to track your health numbers. Work with your health care provider to learn about your numbers and how to keep them in a healthy range.

Important Health Numbers

1. **Body Mass Index (BMI)** is calculated using your weight and height. A high BMI can put you at risk for serious health problems and diseases.

BMI	Weight Status	
Below 18.5	Underweight	High BMI is common,yet serious. Manage your BMI and your other numbers will likely improve, too.
18.5 – 24.9	Normal	
25.0 – 29.9	Overweight	
30.0 and above	Obese	

2. **High blood pressure**, or hypertension, increases the risks of heart attack and stroke. There are two numbers in a blood pressure reading: the top number is the systolic pressure when the heart beats to pump blood into your arteries; the bottom number, or diastolic, is the pressure in the arteries when the heart is at rest between beats.

Blood Pressure Range	Blood Pressure Status	
Below 120/80	Normal	High blood pressure can happen to anyone at any age. Talk to your health care provider about ways to manage your blood pressure.
120/80 to 139/89	Prehypertension	
140/90 to 159/99	Stage 1 hypertension	
160/100	Stage 2 hypertension	

3. **Blood glucose** is the amount of glucose, or sugar, in the blood. Glucose enters the bloodstream and circulates to all the cells. For glucose to

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enter the cells, it needs insulin. Normally, the pancreas releases insulin; however, if your body does not make enough or the insulin does not work right, it stays in the blood and makes your glucose level high.

- ***Type 1 diabetes*** is a lifelong condition in which insulin must be taken every day.
- ***Type 2 diabetes*** is when the body makes insulin, but the insulin does not do its job getting glucose into the cells.
- ***Gestational diabetes*** happens in 1 out of 20 pregnancies.

Blood Glucose Categories	Blood Glucose Tests	
	Fasting	**Random (not fasting)**
Normal	70 to 99	80 to 120 before meals/waking 100 to 140 at bedtime
Prediabetes (high risk for type 2 diabetes)	100 to 125	
Diabetes	126 and over	

4. **Cholesterol** is a waxy substance in the blood that builds cell structures and makes hormones. Too much cholesterol can lead to heart attack and stroke.

Blood Cholesterol Categories	Ranges	
Normal	Less than 200	Have your cholesterol checked every five years beginning at age 20.
Borderline-high	200 to 239	
High	240 and above	

Total cholesterol is the sum of two types of cholesterol in your blood: LDL and HDL.

- ***LDL*** is low-density lipoprotein. This "bad" cholesterol clogs arteries. Aim for an LDL less than 100 (the lower, the better).
- ***HDL*** is high-density lipoprotein. It is the "good" cholesterol that takes the LDL out of your blood. Aim for an HDL number higher than 60.

5. **Triglycerides** are unused calories stored in your fat cells. If you eat too many calories, it can lead to a high triglyceride level.

Triglyceride Categories	Ranges	
Normal	Less than 150	High triglycerides are often a sign of other problems. A high level may also result from taking certain medications.
Borderline-high	150 to 199	
High	200 to 499	
Very high	500 and above	

Your Plan

Health Habit	I do this.	I need to work on this.	I will talk to my health care provider about this.
Be active 30 minutes a day			
Eat and drink wisely			
Avoid tobacco			
Cope with stress			

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