BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING PROCEDURES

Supplies
• Stethoscope
• Sphygmomanometer Blood Pressure Cuffs (Small and Large)

Definition
Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against artery walls. It is expressed by two numbers. The top number is the systolic blood pressure (SBP), the pressure measured when the heart beats. The bottom number is the diastolic blood pressure (DBP), the pressure measured when the heart rests between beats.

Purpose
It is important that blood pressure remains within a certain range so that blood can do its job. When too high or too low, there is a risk damage will be done and that vital nutrients will not get to where they need to go to meet the body’s needs.

Measurement
• In a diagnostic setting, it is recommended that participants are seated quietly for at least a few minutes prior to blood pressure measurement and that at least two measurements are taken. In a health fair setting, efficiency is valued, the focus is on screening and health education, and it is usually impossible for participants to sit quietly for a few minutes prior to screening. We recommend immediate screening and that a second measurement be taken only for those whose results are above Normal.
• Participants sit in a chair, with feet on the floor, and arm supported at heart level.
• An appropriate-sized cuff (with cuff bladder encircling at least 80% of the arm) is used to ensure accuracy.
• SBP is the point at which the first of two or more sounds is heard. DBP is the point before the disappearance of sounds.
• Clinicians write results on handouts, which are given to participants after screening, and/or as otherwise instructed.

Interpreting Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Systolic</th>
<th>And</th>
<th>Diastolic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>&lt; 120</td>
<td>And</td>
<td>&lt; 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prehypertension</td>
<td>120-139</td>
<td>Or</td>
<td>80-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1 Hypertension</td>
<td>140-159</td>
<td>Or</td>
<td>90-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2 Hypertension</td>
<td>&gt; 160</td>
<td>Or</td>
<td>&gt; 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Important Tips
• In health fair settings, blood pressures commonly read a bit higher than usual for a variety of reasons, including active environments, participants being unable to sit quietly for a few minutes prior to screening, and “white coat syndrome.”
• In the 2003 publication noted below, the classification “prehypertension” was introduced in order to emphasize the importance of, and need for, increased education on healthy BP levels and how to prevent the development of hypertension. This publication also combined Stage 1 and Stage 2 classifications, so there is no longer a Stage 3.