



February 2016

February: Blood Pressure - What it means to your health



When your heart beats, the **blood** it pumps out puts **pressure** against the walls of your blood vessels. These blood vessels (called arteries) carry that blood throughout your body, transporting oxygen and nutrients.

- Two numbers make up a blood pressure reading.
 - The first and larger number is called the **Systolic Pressure**. It is the force pushing against the artery walls when the heart beats.
 - The second and smaller number is called the **Diastolic Pressure**. It is the force pushing against the walls between beats when the heart is at rest.
 - Both numbers are important.
 - A normal reading is less than 120 systolic and less than 80 diastolic.
- High blood pressure (**Hypertension**):
 - Usually develops gradually over many years.
 - Eventually affects nearly everyone.
 - Can also happen suddenly because of some other medical condition.
 - **One in three American adults has high blood pressure.**
 - See table for current blood pressure categories.
- Having high blood pressure is not normal. Usually there are no symptoms with high blood pressure. But that does not mean damage is not happening to your body.
- **High blood pressure can kill you.** It is a major cause of strokes, heart attacks, heart failure, blindness, kidney failure, and erectile dysfunction.
- That is why it is important to have your blood pressure checked on a regular basis.

- If you have been told by your doctor that you have high blood pressure, it is important to follow his/her directions and take the medications they prescribe.
- Lifestyle changes that can help lower blood pressure include: regular aerobic exercise, losing weight, eating low fat foods, cutting back on oils, butter, margarine and shortenings, and using spices, herbs, vinegar, and fruit juices in place of salt.

Knowing your blood pressure and taking steps to keep it in a normal range is one of the best things you can do for your health!

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mm Hg (upper #)	and	Diastolic mm Hg (lower #)
Normal	less than 120	and	less than 80
Prehypertension	120 – 139	or	80 – 89
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1	140 – 159	or	90 – 99
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2	160 or higher	or	100 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis (Emergency care needed)	Higher than 180	or	Higher than 110



Tech Corner

Smart Blood Pressure Tracker (SmartBP) is free for iPhone and Android devices

- Tracking your blood pressure is important in protecting your heart health.
- Whether you have high blood pressure, or at risk of developing it, this app's interactive chart helps you keep track of information and specific problems you can share with your doctor.

<http://www.evolvemedsys.com/http://www.evolvemedsys.com/>

Worried About Getting E.coli or Norovirus When You Eat Out?

Here are Five Tips from the *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* to cut your risk:

1. **If your food is not cooked properly send it back.** If a food is supposed to be hot it should be hot and if it is supposed to be cold it should be cold.
2. **Be wary of raw meats, eggs, seafood and poultry.** While some of these foods are served raw, it can come with bacteria and parasites, which could cause food poisoning.
3. **Always check for cleanliness.** Be sure tables and silverware are clean, there are no signs of insects or other pests, the bathrooms are clean, and there is a health inspector certificate displayed.
4. **If you have a food allergy, double check.** Check menus closely and ask your server if you are not sure about all of the ingredients. Better to be safe than sorry.
5. **Take care of those leftovers.** Get them in the fridge within 2 hours from the time your food arrives at the table. If the air temperature is above 90 degrees, make that an hour. Be sure to reheat to 165 degrees.



Recipe of the Month — Healthy Joe's

Get all the sloppy delicious fun without as much of the fat of a traditional Sloppy Joe's.

Servings 4; 1 sandwich per serving

Calories 285 | Sodium 663 mg | Total Fat 6 grams | Protein 26 grams

Ingredients

- ¾ pound lean ground beef (extra-lean 90 percent lean)
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 medium red, yellow, or green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 ½ cups low-fat meatless spaghetti sauce
- 1 medium zucchini, shredded
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon bottled minced garlic
- 4 whole-wheat hamburger buns, split
- Alfalfa sprouts (optional)



Directions

1. In a large skillet, cook beef, onion, and bell peppers over medium-high heat until meat is brown and onion is tender, about 7 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Place meat mixture in a colander and rinse under hot water. Drain well, wipe skillet with a paper towel. Return meat mixture to skillet.
3. Stir in spaghetti sauce, zucchini, chili powder, paprika, salt, and garlic. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes.
4. Spoon meat mixture onto buns. Top with alfalfa sprouts, if desired.

Fit Tip: Hip Flexor Stretch

If you spend much of your time sitting, your hip flexor muscles can become very tight. Here are a few ways to stretch these muscles.

- ▶ Before stretching, remember to warm-up.
- ▶ Hold stretches for 30 seconds.
- ▶ Do two stretches on each leg.
- ▶ Do not hold your breath when stretching!



This stretch can be done standing, half-kneeling, or sitting on the edge of a chair. The key is to not arch your lower back, but instead “tuck your tail.” Bringing your tail bone forward and under you is what stretches these muscles. You should feel this stretch right where the front pocket is in a pair of jeans.

For the half-kneeling stretch, be sure the surface under your knee is well padded.