

BLOOD PRESSURE vs. HEART RATE



OCTOBER

If my heart rate is healthy, is my blood pressure normal?

Blood pressure and heart rate are not the same. Learn the differences. Your pulse rate is not correlated with your blood pressure. Know your BP numbers!

	BLOOD PRESSURE	HEART RATE
What is it?	The force of the blood against the walls of arteries	The number of times your heart beats per minute
What is the unit of measurement?	mm Hg (millimeters of mercury)	BPMs (beats per minute)
What do the numbers represent?	Includes two measurements: Systolic pressure (top number): The pressure as the heart beats and forces blood into the arteries Diastolic pressure (bottom number): The pressure as the heart relaxes between beats	Includes a single number representing the number of heartbeats per minute
Sample reading	120/80 mm Hg	60 BPM

Here are some more things to know about the correlation between blood pressure and [heart rate](#).

- **There is no good correlation between pulse rate and blood pressure.** Measuring pulse rate does not indicate high or low blood pressure. For people with high blood pressure, there's no substitute for measuring blood pressure.
- **A rising heart rate does not cause your blood pressure to increase at the same rate.** Even though your heart is beating more times a minute, healthy blood vessels dilate (get larger) to allow more blood to flow through more easily. When you exercise, your heart speeds up so the blood can reach your muscles. It may be possible for your heart rate to double safely, while your blood pressure may respond by only increasing a modest amount.
- **Taking your pulse can measure your cardiovascular activity and oxygen consumption but it is not a substitute for measuring your blood pressure.**
 If you take your pulse (measuring your heart rate) before, during and after physical activity, you'll notice your pulse will increase over the course of the exercise. The greater the intensity and the more energy the activity demands, the more your pulse will increase. When you stop exercising, your pulse does not immediately return to normal; it gradually returns to its resting level. The greater your fitness level, the sooner your pulse rate will return to normal. These numbers may be helpful to understand but they are not linked to your blood pressure.