



# Know your numbers

Important health metrics to check — and why they matter



Staying on top of your health starts with knowing some important measurements. These numbers give you insights about your heart, blood, and overall health. Use the tables below as a guide, then talk to your doctor about ways to stay on track.



## Blood pressure<sup>1</sup>

**What it is:** A measure of the force of blood in your arteries

**Why it matters:** Hypertension (high blood pressure) can increase the risk of heart attack or stroke.

Systolic (top number)  
Less than

**120 mmHg**

Diastolic (bottom number)  
Less than

**80 mmHg**



## Cholesterol<sup>2</sup>

**What it is:** A type of fat that helps your body function

**Why it matters:** Too much LDL (“bad” cholesterol) raises your risk of heart disease. HDL is the “good” cholesterol.

Age	Total	LDL goal	HDL goal
19 and younger	Below 170 mg/dL	Below 110 mg/dL	45 mg/dL or higher
20 and older	125 to 200 mg/dL	Below 100 mg/dL	Men: 40 mg/dL or higher Women: 50 mg/dL or higher



## Blood sugar<sup>3</sup>

**What it is:** The amount of glucose (sugar) in your blood

**Why it matters:** High blood sugar may be a sign of diabetes.



Fasting blood sugar level (8-12 hours after eating)

Below

**100 mg/dL**



## HbA1c<sup>4</sup>

**What it is:** Your average blood sugar over the past three months

**Why it matters:** It helps track how well your blood sugar is being managed.



HbA1c  
range



## Waist size<sup>5</sup>

**What it is:** A simple check to find out if you're carrying excess body fat around your waist (the top of your hipbone, level with your belly button)

**Why it matters:** Your waist measurement can help you understand your risk for diabetes, heart disease, and other health issues.



### High-risk waist size

Men

**40 inches**  
or more

Women

**35 inches**  
or more



## Resting heart rate<sup>6</sup>

**What it is:** The number of times your heart beats per minute

**Why it matters:** A rate within your target range means your heart is working as it should.

**Use the following formula to find your target heart rate:**

220 - your age = **maximum**  
 Maximum x 0.6 = **low end of target range**  
 Maximum x 0.8 = **high end of target range**

**For example, if you're 40 years old:**

220 - 40 = **180**  
 180 x 0.6 = **108**  
 180 x 0.8 = **144**



Your maximum heart rate is 180, and your target range is between 108 and 144.

These numbers are general guidelines for most people. Be sure to talk with your doctor to understand what's right for you based on your age, background, and overall health. Ask how your numbers look and what small steps you can take to improve them.

Visit [myCigna.com](https://myCigna.com) to find a doctor or schedule an appointment.

1. American Heart Association. "Understanding Blood Pressure Readings." Last reviewed May 17, 2024. <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/understanding-blood-pressure-readings>  
 2. Cleveland Clinic. "Cholesterol Levels." Last reviewed July 19, 2024. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/11920-cholesterol-numbers-what-do-they-mean>  
 3. Mayo Clinic. "Diabetes." Last reviewed March 27, 2024. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/diabetes/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20371451>  
 4. CDC. "A1C Test for Diabetes and Prediabetes." Last reviewed May 15, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/diabetes-testing/prediabetes-a1c-test.html>  
 5. WebMD. "How to Measure Your Waist." Last reviewed July 19, 2024. <https://www.webmd.com/diet/calculating-your-waist-circumference>  
 6. Cleveland Clinic. "Heart Rate." Last reviewed March 12, 2024. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diagnostics/heart-rate>  
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