

# Skeltons Chemists

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## Opening Times

Monday to Friday - 8.30am - 5.30pm

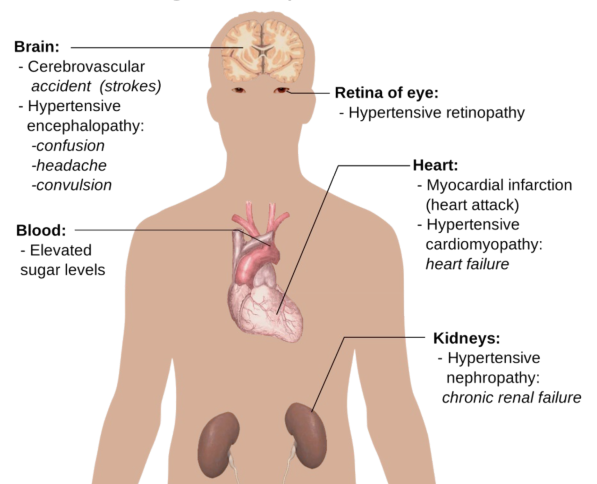
Saturday - 8.30am - 3pm

Sundays & Bank Holidays - Closed

## Your FREE Healthy Living Leaflet for June 2022

1. What is hypertension?
2. What are the symptoms?
3. What happens if it doesn't get treated?
4. How do you find out if you have hypertension?
5. How many people have high blood pressure?
6. How do you measure high blood pressure?
7. What do these numbers measure?
8. What is the ideal blood pressure?
9. What is considered as high blood pressure?
10. What is the treatment?

Main complications of persistent  
High blood pressure



Answers on the bottom of page two

### What is hypertension?

Hypertension is the medical term for high blood pressure. It rarely has noticeable symptoms, but if untreated it increases your risk of serious problems such as heart attacks and stroke. Around one third of the adult population in the UK have high blood pressure though many will not realise it.

The only way to find out if you have high blood pressure is to get it measured, either at your GP surgery, your pharmacy or to do it yourself. Blood pressure is recorded using a cuff on your upper arm with two numbers. The systolic pressure (the higher number) is the force at which your heart

pumps blood around your body and the diastolic pressure (the lower number) is the resistance to that blood flow in your blood vessels. They are both measured in millimetres of mercury (mmHg).

An ideal blood pressure is usually considered to be between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg whilst a high blood pressure would be one above 140/90mmHg (150/90mmHg or higher if you are over 80).

Blood pressure readings of between 120/80mmHg and 140/90mmHg could mean you're at risk of developing high blood pressure if you do not take steps to keep it under control.



## What are the risks of high blood pressure?

If your blood pressure is too high, it puts extra strain on your blood vessels, heart and other organs such as your brain, kidneys and eyes. Persistent high blood pressure can increase your risk of:

- Heart disease
- Heart attacks
- Strokes
- Heart failure
- Peripheral arterial disease
- Aortic aneurysms
- Kidney disease
- Vascular dementia

If you have high blood pressure, reducing it even a small amount can help you lower your risk of these health conditions. Things that can increase your risk of getting high blood pressure are:

- ◆ Being overweight
- ◆ Eating too much salt and not enough fruit and vegetables
- ◆ Not getting enough exercise
- ◆ Drinking too much alcohol
- ◆ Smoking
- ◆ Not getting enough sleep
- ◆ Being over 65
- ◆ Having a relative with high blood pressure
- ◆ Being of black African or black Caribbean descent
- ◆ Living in a deprived area

## Prevention of high blood pressure

High blood pressure can often be prevented or reduced by making some lifestyle changes:

- \* Have a healthy diet - cut down on the amount of salt you eat - (salt raises your blood pressure). Eat a diet that includes lots of fibre such as nuts and whole grains with plenty of fruit and vegetables. The Mediterranean diet has been found to be the most healthy.
- \* Limit your alcohol to 14 units per week preferably spread over 3 days or more. Alcohol is also high in calories and so will



make you gain weight. Find out how many calories are in your favourite drink.

- \* Lose weight - being overweight forces your heart to work harder to pump your blood around your body, which can raise your blood pressure. Remember losing just a few pounds will make a difference.
- \* Get active - taking regular exercise keeps your heart and blood vessels in good condition. Adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderately intense aerobic exercise like cycling or brisk walking per week. Choose something you enjoy doing or you won't stick with it. If you suffer from joint pain swimming is your best option.
- \* Cut down on caffeine - drinking more than 4 cups of coffee a day may increase your blood pressure.
- \* Stop smoking - smoking does not directly cause high blood pressure, but it puts you at a much higher risk of a heart attack and stroke and it causes your arteries to narrow. So, if you smoke and have high blood pressure your risk of a heart or lung disease is dramatically increased.

If your blood pressure is consistently above 140/90mmHg (or 135/85mmHg at home) and your risk of other problems is high, or your blood pressure is consistently above 160/100mmHg you will be offered medicine to lower your blood pressure as well as advice on lifestyle changes.

The medicines you may be offered could include:

- Angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors to relax your blood vessels
- Angiotensin-2 receptor blockers (ARBs) recommended if ACE inhibitors cause troublesome side effects
- Calcium channel blockers which widen your blood vessels
- Diuretics, sometimes known as water tablets, work by flushing excess water and salt from your body through your pee.
- Beta blockers which make your heart beat more slowly and with less force.

**If you would like to know more about this or think you might have high blood pressure and would like to check, then contact one of our trained team for more information.**

Answers: Q1, It means you have high blood pressure. Q2, It rarely has noticeable symptoms. Q3, It increases your risk of serious problems such as heart attacks and stroke. Q4, Get it measured at your pharmacy or your GPs. Q5, About one third of adults in the UK have hypertension but many don't realise it. Q6, Using a cuff on your upper arm which records with two numbers - diastolic and systolic pressure. Q7, The systolic number (the higher one) is the force at which your heart pumps blood around your body and the diastolic pressure (the lower number) is the resistance to the blood flow in your blood vessels. Q8, Between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg. Q9, 140/90mmHg or higher (150/90mmHg if you are over 80). Q10, Lifestyle changes and medication.