

# EXTINGUISH HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE



**The Great News** is that high blood pressure can be controlled. And that's important because you can actually lower your risk of a heart attack and stroke if you keep your blood pressure in a healthy range. In fact, by controlling your blood pressure you can reduce your risk of stroke by 40%.

**Start Now.** Have your blood pressure checked by a firefighter -- for free!

## What is Blood Pressure (BP)?

Your blood pressure is a measure of the pressure or force of the blood against the walls of your blood vessels. The pressures being measured are during the heart's contraction (systolic pressure) and between contractions (diastolic pressure). Your BP is recorded as:



**systolic pressure**     **e.g. 120**

**diastolic pressure**     **e.g. 80**

## Should I Have My BP Checked? How Often?

**Yes!** 22% of Canadians have High Blood Pressure (Hypertension); 50% of Canadians over age 55 have High Blood Pressure. This condition often has no symptoms and can lead to:

- **Stroke**                      • **Heart Attack**
- **Kidney Disease**            • **Heart Failure**

BP should be checked at least every 2 years, or more often if recommended by your physician.

## How do I Prepare to Have My Blood Pressure Checked

- Avoid heavy physical exercise for at least 2-3 hours before testing.
- Avoid smoking and/or caffeine (e.g. coffee, cola, tea, chocolate) for at least 2 hours.
- Avoid eating for at least 30 minutes or 2 hours if you are over 55 years of age.
- Empty bladder and bowel at least 30 minutes before coming in.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing with easy access to bare upper arms.
- Come early to warm up or cool off (depending on the weather) then relax... it doesn't hurt, and it's free!
- Let us know if you are taking any over-the-counter medications (cold remedies, nicotine gum, etc.).
- If you already have a wallet card to track your BP measurement, be sure to have it updated. If you don't already have a wallet card, you will be given one after your B.P. has been checked.

