



Make YOUR
Heart Healthy!



Florida Heart
Research Institute

The Florida Heart Research Institute has been an international leader in cardiovascular research and education for over 60 years, employing a unique blend of scientific and clinical research in studying the causes, effects and prevention of coronary heart disease.

FHRI is an independent non-profit organization that relies heavily on tax-deductible, corporate and individual donations to fund its educational and research programs. For more information on FHRI research, prevention and educational programs, view our web site at www.floridaheart.org or call (305) 674-3020.

THIS TAG SAVES LIVES!



The **Stop Heart Disease** license plate funds Florida programs in heart disease:

- ♥ Research ♥ Education ♥ Prevention

Plates may be purchased through your local tax collector's office or online at www.heartplate.org.

Florida Heart Research Institute

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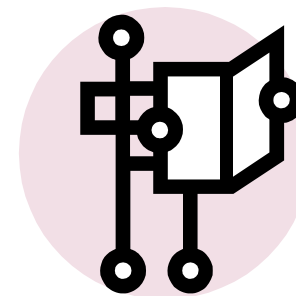
An independent, not-for-profit organization.



Florida Heart
Research Institute



Understanding Blood Pressure



Today's Research Is Tomorrow's Cure

Telephone: (305) 674-3020 or
(866) HRT-TAGS toll free

Web Site: www.floridaheart.org or
www.heartplate.org

Are YOU At Risk?

Florida Heart Research Institute offers a **FREE** Cardiovascular Risk Factor Screening to state residents and organizations.

Our **ONSITE** screening includes:

- ♥ Blood pressure
- ♥ EKG
- ♥ Fasting blood analysis including cholesterol and triglyceride levels, glucose, Homocysteine, fibrinogen, and C-Reactive protein—all state-of-the-art markers for heart disease
- ♥ Educational information and one-on-one counseling about your risk factors

Our **OFFSITE** screening includes:

- ♥ Blood pressure
- ♥ Body Mass Index
- ♥ Finger stick to test blood for total cholesterol, HDL and glucose levels
- ♥ Educational information and review of your test results
- ♥ Educational lectures available upon request

By appointment only:

(305) 674-3181



Blood Pressure: The Silent Killer!

High blood pressure is commonly referred to as “**The Silent Killer**” because many people have no symptoms to let them know that something is wrong. Some people do experience head aches or lightheadedness which they mistake for other causes.

High blood pressure can strike anyone at any time. That is why it is so important to regularly check your blood pressure.

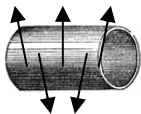
Make a habit of taking the time to check your blood pressure wherever the self service machines are available. If you notice that either of your results are consistently over the following **normal** levels (after 2 or 3 visits) , please see your primary physician:

Blood Pressure Levels:

	Systolic	Diastolic
Normal	< 120	and < 80
Pre-hypertension	120 - 139	or 80 - 89
Stage 1 hypertension	140 - 159	or 90 - 99
Stage 2 hypertension	> 159	or > 99

Measured in mm Hg : millimeters of Mercury

Systolic—measures the peak pressure on your arteries when the heart is pumping blood out to the body.



Diastolic—measures the pressure between heart pumps when the blood is circulating throughout the body (resting).



What is Blood Pressure?

Blood pressure is a very important measurement of the flow of blood throughout your body. Our hearts must pump oxygen rich blood all the way down to our fingers and toes. Blood pressure measures the force of the blood against the artery walls. If the pressure is too high (hypertension), it weakens the blood vessels and strains the heart because it must work extra hard to get the oxygenated blood to the rest of the body.

Blood Pressure is measured by inflating a “cuff” around your arm. Two numbers are recorded—the first number is the Systolic blood pressure and the second number is the Diastolic blood pressure (see box on left).



The Effects of High Blood Pressure

Over time, high blood pressure strains the heart and weakens the blood vessels. If left untreated, high blood pressure increases your risk of heart attack and stroke and may also lead to blindness, kidney failure and heart failure.

What Causes High Blood Pressure?

In most cases, it is difficult to determine the exact cause of high blood pressure. We do know that certain risk factors play a key role in its presence: obesity (being overweight), inactivity, heavy alcohol consumption, age, family history and race.

Managing High Blood Pressure

Living a healthy lifestyle is the first step to reducing your blood pressure:

- ♥ **Eat a Heart Healthy Diet**—that is low in salt and cholesterol but high in fiber. Avoid foods high in saturated fats such as milk products, red meats, spreads and dressings—these foods are high in cholesterol. Total sodium intake should be under 2,400 mg a day. Cook your foods without salt and use olive oil rather than butter. Eat more protein-rich legumes, fruits and vegetables.
- ♥ **Exercise and Maintain a Healthy Weight**—to lower your cholesterol and your blood pressure. A good rule of thumb is to strive for 30 minutes of exercise a day. Whenever possible, take the stairs rather than the elevator or walk rather than drive.
- ♥ **Reduce Stress**—through relaxation techniques and a positive attitude. Stress causes your heart to have to work harder. Learn what techniques work best for you and then employ them daily.
- ♥ **Stop Smoking**—by identifying when you most like to smoke and then changing your daily habits to avoid those times. Smoking constricts your blood vessels which leads to high blood pressure. It also reduces the HDL—the good cholesterol that your body needs!
- ♥ **Limit Alcohol**—to no more than 2 drinks (or 1 ounce of alcohol) per day. Heavy alcohol use can raise your blood pressure over time.

Blood Pressure Medication

When changes to your lifestyle still don't lower your blood pressure, then your doctor may prescribe medication to lower it. When this happens it is extremely important that you take the medication exactly as the doctor ordered. Check with a doctor or pharmacist before taking any over-the-counter drugs in case there is a conflict with your blood pressure medication.

The key to managing high blood pressure is to catch it and reduce it before it causes damage to your body! Prevention = LIFE!