Know Your Numbers to *Get* Healthy and *Stay* Healthy

1

How do I calculate my BMI?

BMI is "Body Mass Index" and is calculated using height and weight. Calculate your BMI easily on the National Institutes of Health (NIH) website: www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi

- BMI categories:

Underweight = **<18.5**
Normal Weight = **18.5-24.9**
Overweight = **25-29.9**
Obesity ≥ **30**

2

What is my goal blood pressure?

- Optimal blood pressure is **<120/80.**
- For people with heart disease or diabetes, the recommended goal is **<130/80.**
- Each **20mmHg** increase in the top number doubles the risk of dying from a heart attack.

3

What are my goal cholesterol levels?

- Optimal total cholesterol goal is **<200.**
- Bad cholesterol (LDL) goal is **<70-130** depending on risk factors for heart disease.
- Good cholesterol (HDL) goal is **>40 for men** and **>50 for women.**
- Triglyceride (fatty lipids) goal is **<150.**

4

If my cholesterol is not at goal, what should I do?

- To optimize cholesterol levels, eat a high fiber, lower fat diet and increase physical activity.
- Some people may require medications to achieve their individual cholesterol goals.

5

Why does obesity promote diabetes?

Excess weight (especially abdominal fat) causes the body to not respond to insulin as it should. When this happens, blood sugar level rises and the pancreas has to release more and more insulin to help the tissues process the sugar. Eventually the pancreas can wear out, requiring insulin therapy.

6

Is diet soda a good alternative for me?

Probably not. Diet soda does contain high amounts of sodium which can increase blood pressure. Also, recent evidence links diet soda to increased rates of obesity.

7

How much exercise is recommended?

Daily activity has been shown to lower blood pressure, blood sugar and improve cholesterol. Additionally, daily activity releases stress.
- **15-20 minutes** of daily walking is shown to reduce the risk of developing diabetes.

8

How many steps a day should I be walking?

- **30 minutes** of daily activity, or **10,000 steps** a day, will provide for an active lifestyle.
- The average person naturally walks about **2000 steps**, or **one mile**, per day.

9

Does weight loss really help prevent diabetes?

The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) study showed that a **7%** weight loss decreases the risk of diabetes by **58%.**

10

If I have a family history of diabetes or high blood pressure, am I doomed?

Not necessarily. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle goes a long way in the prevention of diabetes and high blood pressure. Early screening is important to help implement lifestyle changes in time. Be sure to discuss your family history with your health care providers.

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