

# Know Your Numbers



Once again, September sees the return of national **Know Your Numbers week (8th – 14th September 2025)**. This annual event, run by [bloodpressureUK.org](https://www.bloodpressureUK.org), is now in its 25th year.

It is estimated that **1 in 3 adults in the UK have high blood pressure**. There are often no symptoms of high blood pressure, and for many, the first sign may be a **heart attack or stroke**.

Every day in the UK, **350 people have a stroke or heart attack that could have been prevented**

The theme for 2025 is **Looking for the Missing Millions**. Blood Pressure UK suggest that **5 million UK adults have high blood pressure and don't know it**. High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, can also cause other diseases too, including kidney disease, dementia and a range of others. It is easy to see why it is known as "the silent killer".

There is good news though. The risks of high blood pressure can be managed and reduced with the right support and the right lifestyle choices. The first step is identifying who is at risk, and the best way to do that is, you've guessed it, to **Know Your Numbers**. This campaign is all about raising awareness of the importance of getting regular blood pressure checks.

By making the time to **measure your blood pressure at home**, using a simple, easily available and inexpensive blood pressure monitor, you can ensure that you and your family know your numbers and are equipped to take any action necessary to reduce your risk of stroke, heart disease or a range of other blood pressure related diseases.

### ***But what are the Numbers?***

**Blood Pressure** is typically expressed as a higher number over a lower number, such as **110/70**.

The higher number is known as the systolic pressure and is a measure of the force with which your heart pumps blood around your body, while the lower number is known as diastolic pressure and is a measure of the resistance to the blood flow in the blood vessels.

**A healthy blood pressure is anything between 90/60 and 120/80.**

### ***What do I do if the numbers are high?***

If you get several readings above 120/80, you should **make an appointment immediately with your GP** to discuss how to reduce your blood pressure. For many, this can be done through lifestyle changes such as increasing exercise and following a healthy diet low in saturated fats and high in fibre. For others, the GP may recommend medication to help manage blood pressure.

### ***Any other numbers I should be aware of?***

Yes! When it comes to managing health, blood pressure is not the only number that matters.

Other measures can be taken by you GP or pharmacist, or at home, to identify risks such as:

- **High cholesterol**, which is a major cause of increased blood pressure and heart disease.
- **High levels of blood sugar/glucose**, which can lead to Diabetes.

And there are other numbers, in the form of recommended guidelines, which can help to maintain a healthy lifestyle:

- Maintain a healthy **Body Mass Index (18.5 – 24.9)**, to reduce risks of various health conditions through healthy eating, regular exercise and reducing alcohol consumption.
- You should aim to get at least **150 minutes of moderate intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity per week**, including strengthening activities at least 2 days per week, and daily movements to reduce time spent sitting.
- Limit **alcohol consumption** of no more than **14 units per week** which equals 6 pints of lower strength lager (3.6%), 4½ pint of stronger beer (5.2%) or 7 glasses of wine (12%).

You can find more information and advice on these important health metrics and how to manage them via the following links:

[Blood Pressure UK](https://www.bloodpressureuk.org/know-your-numbers/)

<https://www.bloodpressureuk.org/know-your-numbers/>

[British Heart Foundation](https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/medical/ask-the-experts/new-cholesterol-guidelines)

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/medical/ask-the-experts/new-cholesterol-guidelines>

[NHS Information - high blood sugar](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-sugar-hyperglycaemia/)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-sugar-hyperglycaemia/>

[NHS BMI Calculator](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/)

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/>

[Alcohol and You](https://web.nrw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/leaflets/Alcohol%20and%20You.pdf)

<https://web.nrw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/leaflets/Alcohol%20and%20You.pdf>

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