

What do blood pressure numbers mean?

Blood pressure is recorded as two numbers, one over the other, such as 120/80. Both are measured in units called millimetres of mercury (or mm Hg).

Systolic pressure: The top number, called the systolic pressure, is the pressure each time your heart contracts (or squeezes).

Diastolic pressure: The bottom number, or diastolic pressure, is the pressure in the artery as the heart relaxes before the next beat.

Blood Pressure Stages

Blood Pressure	Systolic (top number) mm Hg		Diastolic (bottom number) mm Hg
Low	Less than 90	and	Less than 60
Optimal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Normal	120-129	or	80-84
Normal to High	130-139	or	85-89
High (seek medical care)	Greater than 140	and or	Greater than 90

Source

Heart Research Institute Australia (accessed 13Nov24)

