

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What you need to know about pulse rates

Your pulse is the same as your heart rate. Both are measured in beats per minute (bpm). A normal resting heart rate varies depending on a person's age.

- Infants under 1 year of age: Normal heart rate of 100–160 bpm.
- Children 1–2 years of age: Normal heart rate of 90–150 bpm.
- Children 2–5 years of age: Normal heart rate of 80–140 bpm.
- Children 6–12 years of age: Normal heart rate of 70–120 bpm.
- Everyone over 12 years of age: Normal heart rate of 60–100 bpm.

There can be a lot of variation in your pulse. It can be different depending on the time of day or the amount of exercise that you get. It changes with your fitness level. Many things can change the speed and regularity of your pulse. These include:

- Exercise.
- Fever.
- Stress.
- Heart problems.
- Poor circulation.
- Medicines.

### What you need to know about taking your temperature

There are several kinds of thermometers. The following are recommended for safe use:

- Digital multi-use thermometer. This can be used in the mouth (orally), in the rectum (rectally), or under the arm (axillary). Always label digital multi-use thermometers. Do not use the same digital multi-use thermometer to take your temperature in different ways.
- Temporal artery thermometer. This is placed against the forehead. It picks up the heat from the temporal artery, which runs across the forehead.
- Tympanic thermometer. This type is inserted into the ear canal. It records the heat from the eardrum.

Do not use the following thermometers.

- Glass mercury thermometers. The glass can break. This is dangerous to your health and to the environment.
- Temperature strips. They are not always accurate and are not recommended at this time.

### What do your blood pressure numbers mean?

Two numbers make up your blood pressure. The first number is called systolic pressure. The second is called diastolic pressure. An example of a blood pressure reading is "120 over 80" (or 120/80).

If you are an adult and do not have a medical condition, use this guide to find out if your blood pressure is normal:

#### Normal

- First number: below 120.
- Second number: below 80.

#### Elevated

- First number: 120–129.
- Second number: below 80.

#### Hypertension stage 1

- First number: 130–139.
- Second number: 80–89.

#### Hypertension stage 2

- First number: 140 or above.
- Second number: 90 or above.

Your blood pressure is above normal even if only the top or bottom number is above normal.

Follow these instructions at home:

- Check your blood pressure as often as your doctor tells you to.
- Take your monitor to your next doctor's appointment. Your doctor will:
  - Make sure you are using it correctly.
  - Make sure it is working right.
- Make sure you understand what your blood pressure numbers should be.
- Tell your doctor if your medicines are causing side effects.

Contact a doctor if:

- Your blood pressure keeps being high.

Get help right away if:

- Your first blood pressure number is higher than 180.
- Your second blood pressure number is higher than 120.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.