

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PLAN

Know your numbers



BIOMETRICS

Your numbers for blood pressure, height and weight, triglycerides, cholesterol and glucose (together known as “biometrics”) can provide the information you need to make the right decisions for a healthier, more rewarding life.

Cholesterol

This waxy, fat-like substance occurs naturally in the body.

- Total cholesterol: 200 mg/dL or lower is desirable.
- HDL (high-density lipoprotein): “good” cholesterol that protects against heart disease. Therefore, higher is better.
- LDL (low-density lipoprotein): “bad” cholesterol that can increase your risk of heart disease by building up as plaque inside your artery walls. Less than 100 mg/dL is optimal.
- Triglycerides: A type of fat that circulates in your blood and can increase heart disease risk if too high. Some people may need treatment for triglyceride levels that are borderline high (150-199 mg/dL) or high (200+ mg/dL).

Glucose

This is a sugar that comes from carbohydrates and circulates in your blood. It’s your body’s main source of energy. Insulin is a hormone that helps your body’s cells use glucose. Insulin is produced in the pancreas and released into the blood when the amount of glucose rises. Normally, your glucose levels increase slightly after you eat. Blood glucose levels that remain high over time can damage your eyes, kidneys, nerves, and blood vessels.



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Height and weight

Overweight and obese persons are at an increased risk for hypertension, diabetes, coronary heart disease, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea and some cancers. Your height and weight together add up to your Body Mass Index (BMI).

- Underweight: <18.5
- Normal weight: 18.5–24.9
- Overweight: 25–29.9
- Obese: BMI of 30+

BMI is a fairly reliable way to know if you’re overweight. However, women tend to have more body fat compared to men at the same BMI, as do older persons. Athletes may also have a higher BMI due to more muscle mass.

Blood pressure

Your blood pressure is highest when your heart beats. This is called systolic pressure. Between beats, your blood pressure falls. This is diastolic pressure.

- Normal: 120/80 or lower
- High: 130/80 or higher

High blood pressure usually has no symptoms, but it can cause serious problems such as stroke, heart failure, heart attack, and kidney failure.

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