

# Health & Wellness

## Tip of the Week

**February** is all about having a **healthy heart**. It is the perfect time to remind you about the importance of screenings and making heart health a habit!

**Week 9**  
**February 29, 2016**

### Taking Blood Pressure Screening to Heart

There's a silent killer on the loose. And it's currently affecting about 50 million Americans and 1 billion people worldwide. The killer is high blood pressure, also known as hypertension. Left uncontrolled, it can greatly increase your risk of stroke, heart attack and heart and kidney failure.

There are some risk factors you can't change. People over 35, those having a family history of hypertension and African Americans are more at risk. But you can change these risk factors:

- Obesity
- Excess sodium in your diet • Alcohol use on a regular basis
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Ongoing stress
- Oral contraceptives, especially in overweight smokers

A blood pressure reading of less than 120 over 80 is considered "normal." Pre-hypertension is a reading between 120-139 systolic (the top number in blood pressure reading) and 80-89 diastolic (bottom number). Early diagnosis and treatment of high blood pressure are essential to your good health.

*Source: American Heart Association*



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