



Screening for High Blood Pressure: Clinical Summary of U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation

Population	Adult General Population¹
Recommendation	Screen for high blood pressure Grade: A

Screening Tests	<p>High blood pressure (hypertension) is usually defined in adults as: systolic blood pressure (SBP) of 140 mm Hg or higher, or diastolic blood pressure (DBP) of 90 mm Hg or higher.</p> <p>Due to variability in individual blood pressure measurements, it is recommended that hypertension be diagnosed only after 2 or more elevated readings are obtained on at least 2 visits over a period of 1 to several weeks.</p>
Screening Intervals	<p>The optimal interval for screening adults for hypertension is not known.</p> <p>The Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Pressure (JNC 7) recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • screening every 2 years with BP < 120/80 • screening every year with SBP of 120-139 mmHg or DBP of 80-90 mmHg
Suggestions for Practice	<p>A variety of pharmacological agents are available to treat hypertension. JNC 7 guidelines for treatment of hypertension can be accessed at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/hypertension/incintro.htm.</p> <p>The following non-pharmacological therapies are associated with reductions in blood pressure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduction of dietary sodium intake • potassium supplementation • increased physical activity, weight loss • stress management • reduction of alcohol intake
Other Relevant Recommendations from the USPSTF	<p>Adults with hypertension should be screened for diabetes. Adults should be screened for hyperlipidemia (depending on age, sex, risk factors) and smoking. Clinicians should discuss aspirin chemoprevention with patients at increased risk for cardiovascular disease. These recommendations and related evidence are available at www.preventiveservices.ahrq.gov.</p>

For the full [recommendation statement](#) and [supporting documents](#) please go to <http://www.preventiveservices.ahrq.gov>.

¹ This recommendation applies to adults without known hypertension.