

## The Five-Point Plan

# Know Your Numbers

*"My husband didn't even know he had diabetes until he had a heart attack."*

– Lupe Ontiveros

Actress on "Desperate Housewives"



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## hat does it mean to “Know Your Numbers”?

These are the numbers everyone should learn about themselves:

- Blood sugar levels
- Blood pressure
- Cholesterol levels
- Body mass index (BMI)

It is important to check your numbers regularly – even if you don’t feel sick. Many of the diseases affecting Latinos are “silent killers” that affect you before you feel anything wrong. That’s why knowing your numbers today is much better than waiting to see the doctor after you are sick.

If these numbers are confusing, don’t worry – this part of the reference guide will help you understand what you need to know!

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## BLOOD SUGAR & DIABETES

**Why is a blood sugar test important?** Because the numbers can tell you how to prevent diabetes and prevent complications if you have diabetes. Too much sugar in your blood can mean that you have diabetes.

**How blood sugar works:** Everyone's blood has some sugar in it because your body needs sugar for energy. When you eat, your body breaks food down into sugar and sends it into your bloodstream. Then, your pancreas makes insulin (a hormone) to help get the sugar from the blood into the cells for energy needed in your daily life.



**If diabetes is not treated:** Diabetes is a very serious concern for all Latinos. If it is not controlled diabetes can lead to increased risk of heart attacks, stroke, or other serious problems. You can prevent diabetes, and if you already have diabetes, you can learn to manage this condition to avoid further complications.

**Here's the good news:** You can prevent or improve your condition with simple steps. The first step to preventing diabetes is to know your blood sugar level. Get checked regularly and follow your doctor's direction about foods, exercise and medication.

### Latinos & Diabetes

- Over 10% of all Latinos have diabetes
- 1 in 4 Mexican Americans has diabetes
- 1 out of 2 Latinos born after the year 2000 is likely to develop diabetes in their lifetime

### Definitions of Diabetes

- Type 1 diabetes is when your body does not produce any insulin
- Type 2 diabetes exists when you do not make enough insulin, or the insulin you make does not work well

## Prevention: Warning Signs of Diabetes

- Excessive thirst, hunger and/or unexplained weight loss
- Increased urination
- Extreme or constant fatigue and/or irritability
- Blurred vision
- Tingling or numbness in hands or feet
- Itchy, dry skin
- Sores or wounds that are slow to heal (especially on the feet)

Diabetes is often called the “silent killer” because its symptoms may go unnoticed until one or more of the complications related to the disease occur. If you are overweight or have a family history of diabetes and experience any of these symptoms, you may want to discuss having a blood sugar test with your doctor.





## Understanding Your Blood Sugar Test

| 99 mg. and lower   | 100 - 125 mg.  | 126 mg. and higher  |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Normal</p> <p><i>Maintain a healthy lifestyle to help keep it that way.</i></p> | <p>Pre-Diabetes</p> <p><i>See your doctor. You might need to change your lifestyle to help prevent diabetes.</i></p> | <p>Type 2 Diabetes</p> <p><i>You probably have type 2 diabetes. Follow your doctor's advice. With lifestyle changes and healthy eating you can help prevent or control any future complication.</i></p> |

### Ask Your Doctor:

- Is my blood sugar high?
- When is the best time to check my blood sugar levels?
- What can I do to maintain healthy blood sugar levels?

### Resources:

- American Diabetes Association, 800-342-2383, [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)
- National Diabetes Education Program, 800-438-5383, <http://ndep.nih.gov>
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, [www.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.niddk.nih.gov)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), [www.cdc.gov/diabetes](http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes)
- National Council of La Raza diabetes statistics, [www.nclr.org/section/diabetes\\_statistics](http://www.nclr.org/section/diabetes_statistics)



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## HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION)

### **Why do you need to know about your blood pressure?**

Because it can warn if you are at a higher risk of having heart disease – even if you don't feel that anything is wrong.

The good news is that it is easy to lower your blood pressure with medications, exercise (see the “Be Active” section of this reference guide on page 41), eating more fresh foods and less fatty or salty foods, having regular screenings, and following your doctor's instructions. If you smoke, quitting smoking will have an immediate and positive impact on your total health and often lowers your blood pressure as well.



## Definition of Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the measurement of how hard your heart works to pump blood through your body. Your blood pressure test results will have two numbers: The larger number (systolic) is the pressure while your heart is pumping; the smaller number (diastolic) is the amount of pressure between beats of your heart. A healthy test result for most people is to have the top number under 130 and the bottom number under 80 (for example: 110/70).

## Latinos & High Blood Pressure

- 1 in 4 Latinos and Latinas older than 20 years of age has high blood pressure
- 1 in 5 Latinas has high blood pressure
- The leading cause of death (1 in 3) among Latinos is heart disease

## Ask Your Doctor

- Is my blood pressure high?
- What is my blood pressure target?
- When is the best time to check my blood pressure?
- What can I do to maintain good blood pressure?



## Understand Your Blood Pressure Results

| Category                     | Normal    | Borderline | High Blood Pressure |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|---------------------|
| Systolic<br>(Top Number)     | Below 130 | 130-139    | 140 or higher       |
| Diastolic<br>(Bottom Number) | Below 80  | 80-89      | 90 or higher        |



## Track Your Blood Pressure Results

| Dates | Test results |  |  |
|-------|--------------|--|--|
|       |              |  |  |
|       |              |  |  |
|       |              |  |  |
|       |              |  |  |
|       |              |  |  |
|       |              |  |  |
|       |              |  |  |

**Resources:**

- Blood pressure self-test kits can be bought at pharmacies, and most health fairs offer free tests
- American Heart Association, 800-242-8721, [www.AmericanHeart.org](http://www.AmericanHeart.org)



## CHOLESTEROL

If you have read the previous two chapters, you know that your heart pushes the blood through your body and that the oxygen and sugar in your blood supplies your body with energy. Similar to sugar and oxygen, cholesterol is also found in your blood.

**Cholesterol** is a fat-like substance found in your blood. Cholesterol comes from two sources: (1) foods and (2) your body, which actually makes cholesterol. The good news is that not all cholesterol is bad, while:

- Too much bad cholesterol (LDL and triglycerides) can clog your blood vessels and arteries, which can lead to heart disease and stroke
- The good cholesterol (HDL) can actually clean away the bad cholesterol

### **Get your cholesterol and triglyceride levels checked regularly.**

The National Cholesterol Education Program recommends that people who are 20 years old or older get a test every five years. Ask your doctor for a cholesterol test and discuss how often you should be tested. Based upon your circumstances, your doctor may want you to be tested more or less frequently. Ask for a morning test because you should not eat or drink anything but water for at least nine hours before the blood test.

The cholesterol test will show your good HDL, bad LDL, triglycerides and total cholesterol. If your levels of LDL and/or triglycerides are high, your doctor will help you make changes to lower your cholesterol. Most people with very high LDLs will need a medication called a statin. You can use the chart on page 25 to help understand your results. Write down the results on the “Tracking Your Cholesterol” chart on page 26.





**Lowering your cholesterol is important.** Keep a regular exercise schedule (see the “Be Active” section beginning on page 41), follow your doctor’s advice, and make healthy eating choices (see the nutrition section beginning on page 33). If your doctor prescribes medication, make sure you take it as directed.

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**Resources:**

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, 301-496-4000, [http://health.nih.gov/result.asp?disease\\_id=139&terms=cholesterol](http://health.nih.gov/result.asp?disease_id=139&terms=cholesterol)
- American Heart Association, 800-242-8721, [www.AmericanHeart.org](http://www.AmericanHeart.org)

## Latinos & Cholesterol

- More than 1 in 4 Latinos has borderline high-risk cholesterol levels
- 1 out of 2 Mexican American women has borderline high-risk cholesterol levels
- Latinos check their cholesterol almost 15% less regularly than non-Latinos; this can result in complications due to high cholesterol



## Cholesterol and Triglyceride Levels milligram per deciliter (mg/dL)

| Category          | Total Cholesterol | LDL<br>Lower is better | HDL<br>Higher is better | Triglycerides<br>Lower is better |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Optimal - Healthy | Below 200         | Below 100              | 60 or higher            | Below 150                        |
| Near optimal      |                   | 100 - 129              |                         |                                  |
| Borderline        | 200 - 239         | 130 - 159              | 40 - 59                 | 150 - 199                        |
| Unhealthy         | 240 or higher     | 160 - 189              | Below 40                | 200 - 499                        |
| Very unhealthy    |                   | 190 or higher          |                         |                                  |

\*Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health, ATP III Classification



## Tracking Your Cholesterol

| Checkup or Examination | Date & Results |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Total Cholesterol      |                |
| LDL Cholesterol        |                |
| HDL Cholesterol        |                |
| Triglycerides          |                |



## BODY MASS INDEX (BMI)

The body mass index (BMI) is a measurement system that uses height and weight to determine the best weight and proportion for a person. Being overweight is the result of eating and exercise habits and possibly family health history. By choosing to be disciplined in eating and exercise, you will be on your way to better weight and better health.

Chances are that if you are overweight, you have high levels of blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure. Being overweight puts you at risk for diabetes, heart disease, cancer, vision problems, depression, knee or ankle troubles and more. If you are struggling with your weight, the chances are high that someone in your family also has a weight problem.

Try to be an example to those around you: The best way to maintain a healthy weight is to develop healthy eating and exercise habits. Set short-term and realistic goals for better eating habits and exercise with your doctor's advice. Then, update your goals each week. Don't forget to keep a record of what you eat (see "Sample Food Journal" on page 39) and the exercises you have done (see "Sample Exercise Journal" on page 43). Keeping track of what you are eating and how much or little you are exercising will make you more aware of your behaviors.



# Remember:

Unhealthy snacks can ruin all your hard work, so clean out your home of chips and sodas and cut out fast food. If you are hungry, eat fruit and vegetable slices and nuts. Little changes can make a big difference.

## Latinos & Body Mass

- 4 in 10 Latino children are significantly overweight
- 3 out of 4 Mexican American men aged 20-71 are overweight (74.4 percent); nearly 1 in 3 is at the high-risk overweight level
- Half of California's Latino adults are overweight and nearly 1 in 4 is at the high-risk level

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**Resource:**

[www.obesity.org](http://www.obesity.org)





## BODY MASS INDEX (BMI)

To determine your BMI, find your height in the left-hand column. Then, move across the row to the number that corresponds to your weight. The number at the top of the column is the BMI for your height and weight. For most adults, a BMI in the 19-24 range is normal, and a BMI of 25 or higher means you are overweight. BMI categories are different, however, for pregnant women.

| BMI                  | Normal        |     |     |     |     |     | Overweight |     |     |     |     |     | Obese |     |  |
|----------------------|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|--|
|                      | 19            | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25         | 26  | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 31    | 32  |  |
| Height (Feet/inches) | Weight (Lbs.) |     |     |     |     |     |            |     |     |     |     |     |       |     |  |
| 4'10"                | 91            | 96  | 100 | 105 | 110 | 115 | 119        | 124 | 129 | 134 | 138 | 143 | 148   | 153 |  |
| 4'11"                | 94            | 99  | 104 | 109 | 114 | 119 | 124        | 128 | 133 | 138 | 143 | 148 | 153   | 158 |  |
| 5'                   | 97            | 102 | 107 | 112 | 118 | 123 | 128        | 133 | 138 | 143 | 148 | 153 | 158   | 163 |  |
| 5'1"                 | 100           | 106 | 111 | 116 | 122 | 127 | 132        | 137 | 143 | 148 | 153 | 158 | 185   | 211 |  |
| 5'2"                 | 104           | 109 | 115 | 120 | 126 | 131 | 136        | 142 | 147 | 153 | 158 | 164 | 169   | 175 |  |
| 5'3"                 | 107           | 113 | 118 | 124 | 130 | 135 | 141        | 146 | 152 | 158 | 163 | 169 | 175   | 180 |  |
| 5'4"                 | 110           | 116 | 122 | 128 | 134 | 140 | 145        | 151 | 157 | 163 | 169 | 174 | 180   | 186 |  |
| 5'5"                 | 114           | 120 | 126 | 132 | 138 | 144 | 150        | 156 | 162 | 168 | 174 | 180 | 186   | 192 |  |
| 5'6"                 | 118           | 124 | 130 | 136 | 142 | 148 | 155        | 161 | 167 | 173 | 179 | 186 | 192   | 198 |  |
| 5'7"                 | 121           | 127 | 134 | 140 | 146 | 153 | 159        | 166 | 172 | 178 | 185 | 191 | 198   | 204 |  |
| 5'8"                 | 125           | 131 | 138 | 144 | 151 | 158 | 164        | 171 | 177 | 184 | 190 | 197 | 203   | 210 |  |
| 5'9"                 | 128           | 135 | 142 | 149 | 155 | 162 | 169        | 176 | 182 | 189 | 196 | 203 | 209   | 216 |  |
| 5'10"                | 132           | 139 | 146 | 153 | 160 | 167 | 174        | 181 | 188 | 195 | 202 | 207 | 216   | 222 |  |
| 5'11"                | 136           | 143 | 150 | 157 | 165 | 172 | 179        | 186 | 193 | 200 | 208 | 215 | 222   | 229 |  |
| 6'                   | 140           | 147 | 154 | 162 | 169 | 177 | 184        | 191 | 199 | 206 | 213 | 221 | 228   | 235 |  |
| 6'1"                 | 144           | 151 | 159 | 166 | 174 | 182 | 189        | 197 | 204 | 212 | 219 | 227 | 235   | 242 |  |
| 6'2"                 | 148           | 155 | 163 | 171 | 179 | 186 | 194        | 202 | 210 | 218 | 225 | 233 | 241   | 249 |  |
| 6'3"                 | 152           | 160 | 168 | 176 | 184 | 192 | 200        | 208 | 216 | 224 | 232 | 240 | 248   | 256 |  |
| 6'4"                 | 156           | 164 | 172 | 180 | 189 | 197 | 205        | 213 | 221 | 230 | 238 | 246 | 254   | 263 |  |



| BMI                  | Obese         |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | Extremely Obese |     |     |     |      |  |
|----------------------|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|------|--|
|                      | 33            | 34  | 35  | 36  | 37  | 38  | 39  | 40  | 41              | 42  | 43  | 44  | 45+  |  |
| Height (Feet/inches) | Weight (Lbs.) |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |                 |     |     |     |      |  |
| 4'10"                | 158           | 162 | 167 | 172 | 177 | 181 | 186 | 191 | 196             | 201 | 205 | 210 | 215+ |  |
| 4'11"                | 163           | 168 | 173 | 178 | 183 | 188 | 193 | 198 | 203             | 208 | 212 | 217 | 222+ |  |
| 5'                   | 168           | 174 | 179 | 184 | 189 | 194 | 199 | 204 | 209             | 215 | 220 | 225 | 230+ |  |
| 5'1"                 | 174           | 180 | 185 | 190 | 195 | 201 | 206 | 211 | 217             | 222 | 227 | 232 | 238+ |  |
| 5'2"                 | 180           | 186 | 191 | 196 | 202 | 207 | 213 | 218 | 224             | 229 | 235 | 240 | 246+ |  |
| 5'3"                 | 186           | 191 | 197 | 203 | 208 | 214 | 220 | 225 | 231             | 237 | 242 | 248 | 254+ |  |
| 5'4"                 | 192           | 197 | 204 | 209 | 215 | 221 | 227 | 232 | 238             | 244 | 250 | 256 | 262+ |  |
| 5'5"                 | 198           | 204 | 210 | 216 | 222 | 228 | 234 | 240 | 246             | 252 | 258 | 264 | 270+ |  |
| 5'6"                 | 204           | 210 | 216 | 223 | 229 | 235 | 241 | 247 | 253             | 260 | 266 | 272 | 278+ |  |
| 5'7"                 | 211           | 217 | 223 | 230 | 236 | 242 | 249 | 255 | 261             | 268 | 274 | 280 | 287+ |  |
| 5'8"                 | 216           | 223 | 230 | 236 | 243 | 249 | 256 | 262 | 269             | 276 | 282 | 289 | 295+ |  |
| 5'9"                 | 223           | 230 | 236 | 243 | 250 | 257 | 263 | 270 | 277             | 284 | 291 | 297 | 304+ |  |
| 5'10"                | 229           | 236 | 243 | 250 | 257 | 264 | 271 | 278 | 285             | 292 | 299 | 306 | 313+ |  |
| 5'11"                | 236           | 243 | 250 | 257 | 265 | 272 | 279 | 286 | 293             | 301 | 308 | 315 | 322+ |  |
| 6'                   | 242           | 250 | 258 | 265 | 272 | 279 | 287 | 294 | 302             | 309 | 316 | 324 | 331+ |  |
| 6'1"                 | 250           | 257 | 265 | 272 | 280 | 288 | 295 | 302 | 310             | 318 | 325 | 333 | 340+ |  |
| 6'2"                 | 256           | 264 | 272 | 280 | 287 | 295 | 303 | 311 | 319             | 326 | 334 | 342 | 350+ |  |
| 6'3"                 | 264           | 272 | 279 | 287 | 295 | 303 | 311 | 319 | 327             | 335 | 343 | 351 | 359+ |  |
| 6'4"                 | 271           | 279 | 287 | 295 | 304 | 312 | 320 | 328 | 336             | 344 | 353 | 361 | 369+ |  |