

Own It

Control Your Blood Pressure

Lesson Plan

Call To Action

Control your blood pressure.

Community Need

One third of adults in the U.S. have high blood pressure (HBP). And nearly half of people with HBP do not have it under control. Uncontrolled HBP damages our arteries, heart and other organs, and can cause a heart attack or stroke.



Blood pressure is important to you—and those you care about. Everyone is touched by it. This lesson offers help for those who:

- May be at risk for high blood pressure.
- Have high blood pressure.
- Know people with high blood pressure.
- Care for people with high blood pressure.

Three Important Points

Our lives are busy and many of us are on information overload. That's why we focus on three key health messages:

- Normal blood pressure is untreated blood pressure below 120/80mmHg.
 - (Note: Most patients who are receiving treatment for high blood pressure should aim for <130/80 mmHg, however, everyone should talk with his or her doctor about what target to aim for.)
- High blood pressure is a serious disease and can cause a heart attack or stroke.
- Be EmPowered with blood pressure control.

EmPowered To Serve Health Check

The EmPowered To Serve Health Check is a way for community members to develop an awareness about their blood pressure and current weight. The goal is to get at least 15 percent of your community organization checking these health measures. And, with it in hand, to complete the My Life Check® personal health assessment using your group's unique URL.

You can conduct this optional EmPowered To Serve health check in various ways:

- Before the program, ask participants to check their blood pressure and weight at home, Higi Station or other health kiosk, or their doctor's office.
- Provide a scale and blood pressure machine on site. Ask participants to check their weight and blood pressure before the program gets under way.
- Invite a local healthcare provider or partner with a healthcare organization to check blood pressure and weight for participants at the start of the program.
- If you can host a screening, try to also offer blood glucose and cholesterol checks.

Length of Program

- Budget 1 – 1 ½ hours to present the lesson.
- If you are conducting a health screening, add 20 minutes or more before the meeting for participants to get their blood pressure and weight checked.

Program Materials

No Access to a Slide Projector? Print out the slides and put them in a three-ring binder. Use the printed slides as a script to deliver your health lesson.

- Flip chart and markers.
- Handouts (one copy per participant):
 - Consequences of High Blood Pressure Infographic.
 - Blood Pressure Tracker (printed log).
 - Heart 360 (www.heart360.org) Web site landing page (online tracking tool).
- Pens
- Goody bags: Reach out to local businesses such as hospitals, wellness centers, local clinics and other health organizations. Ask them about donating giveaways for participants. Also check out the American Heart Association store (shop.heart.org) for brochures to buy in bulk. For example:
 - Blood Pressure Know and Go Cards.
 - Simple 7 Know and Go Cards.

Audiovisual Needs

- Projector for PowerPoint slides.
- Internet connection (optional).

Wrap-Up

Reminder! Once your participants have left, be sure to complete the Ambassador Questionnaire. For details, see your Ambassador Guide page 11.

Slide Program with Talking Points and Discussion Questions

The “Notes” section of the PowerPoint slides includes scripted comments for the lesson. Use this to help walk through the lesson. To engage participants, the talking points also include potential discussion questions. For your reference, below is a list of these questions:

- Do you know someone with high blood pressure?
- Why are we concerned about blood pressure?
- Do you think that high blood pressure is a health issue for multicultural communities?
- What is a normal blood pressure?
- What are the two numbers you need to know when you measure your blood pressure?
- If your top number is higher than 130, is your blood pressure considered high?
- Can you have high blood pressure and not know it?
- What are some of the risks of uncontrolled high blood pressure?
- When do doctors typically prescribe medicine for high blood pressure?
- Why does it help to keep track of your blood pressure readings over time?
- Does anyone know what you should do if your top number is higher than 180? (If you get such a high reading, wait a few minutes and check again. If it remains high, seek emergency treatment.)
- How about if your bottom number is above 110? (Check your blood pressure again, if it is still high, seek emergency care.)
- What lifestyle changes can you make to help keep your blood pressure in check?
- Are there changes to your diet that will be easy for you to make?
- Are there ways to add physical activity to your daily routine?
- What would you find most difficult to do in order to control your blood pressure?
- How will you empower yourself to commit to blood pressure control?