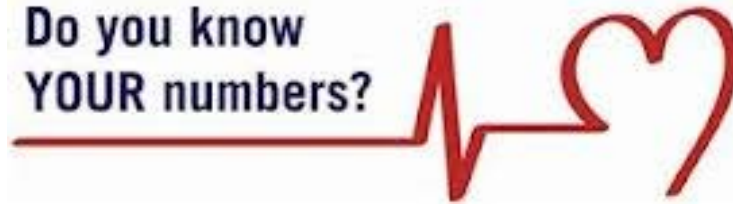


Do you know  
**YOUR** numbers?



## **Know Your Numbers:** The lifesaving numbers you need to know!

As a society we love numbers. We have pin numbers, phone numbers, and social security numbers. We know that our favorite baseball player has a good average if they bat .300 or better. We know that if our college football team goes 12-0 that they have had a successful season. We are good at knowing our numbers when it comes to life and sports, but when it comes to our health we don't know our stats. Even if we did know our numbers, we may not know what they mean. Is a total cholesterol of 300 good or bad? If your BMI is 24 are you healthy, overweight, or obese? Do you know the health numbers that could literally save your life? There are four key numbers you need to know. **Take charge of your health** by learning these numbers and what they mean:



### **Blood Pressure:**

Over 50 million American adults have high blood pressure. Blood pressure is known as the silent killer because 1 of every 3 Americans isn't even aware they have this serious medical condition; sometimes high blood pressure has no symptoms. Having uncontrolled high blood pressure can cause many problems including cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, and stroke.

- Normal blood pressure is below 120/80.
- Pre-hypertension is 120 to 139 and/or 80 to 89.
- Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is 140 or higher and 90 or higher.

### **Cholesterol:**

Cholesterol is the fat in your blood. If your "bad" cholesterol is too high it can build up in your arteries and cause problems that lead to heart attacks and strokes. As you probably already know, all cholesterol isn't all bad. When we measure cholesterol and blood fats we're really talking about a handful of different numbers: HDL, LDL, and triglycerides help make up your "lipid profile".

- A good target for total cholesterol is 200 or lower.
- You want an HDL ("good" cholesterol) of 50 or higher for women, or 40 or higher for men.
- Optimal LDL ("bad" cholesterol) is 100 or lower.
- Triglycerides, another type of blood fat, should be less than 150.

### **Blood Sugar:**

Testing your fasting blood sugar or glucose measures your risk for diabetes. Diabetes is a serious chronic disease that can cause blindness, kidney failure, nerve damage, and is closely linked to heart disease.

- A normal fasting blood sugar is less than 100. A fasting blood sugar between 100-125 is considered pre-diabetes.
- You may have diabetes if your fasting blood sugar is 126 or higher.



### **Weight and Waist:**

It is important to know both your weight and your waist size. A large waistline is a big risk factor for heart health and diabetes. Your overall weight to height ratio (Body Mass Index) is also important.

- A waist size over 35 inches in women and over 40 inches in men greatly increases the risk of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease and more.
- A good way to determine a healthy weight for you is to calculate your Body Mass Index (BMI). The BMI is not a perfect system, so use your waist and BMI together to determine a healthy weight for you. The formula for BMI is (weight in pounds)/(height in inches)<sup>2</sup> X 703. A healthy BMI is 18.5 to 25. A BMI of 30 or more is obese.

### **Do you Know Your Numbers?**

If not, or even if you do, it may be a good time to schedule an appointment with your doctor to see if you are in line with their recommendations. The numbers listed in this article are only guidelines and only a licensed provider can properly interpret your results and diagnose a disease.

\*The above information was provided by the Scott and White Health Plan Vital Care newsletter. (Fall 2013 issue)