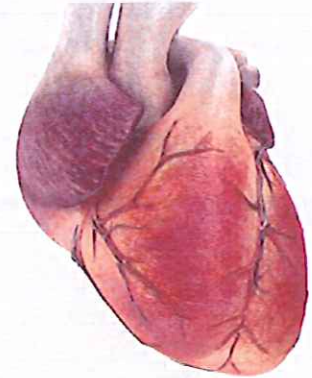


PHE calls for greater high blood pressure awareness

With only half the adult population knowing their blood pressure, Public Health England (PHE) is encouraging all adults over the age of 40 to get it tested as part of the [NHS Health Check](#), a simple measure that could save their life. If found to be at risk, high blood pressure can be managed and reduced by making simple lifestyle changes.

PHE's latest edition of Health matters – a resource for local authorities and health professionals – which has been launched today (24 January 2017) outlines the actions that can be taken to combat high blood pressure.

Often dubbed the 'silent killer', as it rarely causes symptoms, high blood pressure affects more than 1 in 4 people in England and was responsible for around 75,000 deaths in 2015.



Evidence summarised in Health matters shows:

- The NHS Health Check helps diagnose a new case of high blood pressure in every 27 checks.
- Despite being largely preventable, diseases caused by high blood pressure cost the NHS over £2.1 billion a year.
- If the population as a whole reduced their average blood pressure by 5mm Hg this could save the NHS, social care, and local authorities £850 million on health and social care costs.
- £120 million in savings could also be achieved just by increasing the number of adults who have high blood pressure diagnosed by 15%.
- Over 10 million people, aged 40 to 74, have been invited for an NHS Health Check since it launched in 2013 but just under half (46%) actually took the offer up.

What blood pressure readings mean

As you can see from the blood pressure chart, only one of the numbers has to be higher or lower than it should be to count as either high blood pressure or low blood pressure:

90 over 60 (90/60) or less: You may have low blood pressure. More than 90 over 60 (90/60) and less than 120 over 80 (120/80): Your blood pressure reading is ideal and healthy. Follow a healthy lifestyle to keep it at this level.

More than 120 over 80 and less than 140 over 90 (120/80-140/90): You have a normal blood pressure reading but its a little higher than it should be, and you should try to lower it. Make healthy changes to your lifestyle.

140 over 90 (140/90) or higher (over a number of weeks): You may have high blood pressure (hypertension). Change your lifestyle - see your doctor or nurse and take any medicines they may give you.

So:

- **If your top number is 140 or more - then you may have high blood pressure, regardless of your bottom number.**
- **If your bottom number is 90 or more - then you may have high blood pressure, regardless your top number.**
- **If your top number is 90 or less - then you may have low blood pressure, regardless of your bottom number.**
- **If your bottom number is 60 or less - then you may have low blood pressure, regardless of your top number.**

Blood Pressure Chart for Adults

