

YOU HAVE A  
**BRILLIANT**  
*mind.*

DON'T RISK LOSING IT TO HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE.



## WHAT TO ASK YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER ABOUT HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, STROKE, AND DEMENTIA

Black men ages 28 to 45 are at increased risk of high blood pressure<sup>1</sup>, which is a leading cause of stroke and can cause dementia<sup>2</sup>. Many factors can increase your risk of high blood pressure, including genetics and family history, having certain medical conditions (like diabetes), and lifestyle factors<sup>3</sup>. You can have high blood pressure without having any symptoms.

Over time, uncontrolled high blood pressure, especially in mid-life, can damage blood vessels and lead to a stroke<sup>2</sup>. High blood pressure can also lead to other damage in the brain that has been associated with dementia<sup>2</sup>.

The good news is, you can take steps now to get your blood pressure numbers into a healthy range—or keep your numbers in a healthy range—to help prevent stroke and dementia later in life. **Use this guide to talk to your healthcare provider about your risks and ways to manage your blood pressure to help prevent stroke and dementia. Then, make a plan together and stick with it.**

### TIPS

- Make the most of your visit with your healthcare provider by asking all your questions.
- If you don't understand something, ask your healthcare provider to explain.
- Take notes.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

1. What factors could increase my risks for high blood pressure, stroke, and dementia? (e.g., genetics and family history, having certain medical conditions, lifestyle, etc.)?
2. What is my current blood pressure number, and what is considered normal?
3. Why is it important for me to take control of my blood pressure now?
4. What steps can I take to manage my blood pressure and reduce my risks for stroke and dementia? This can include small steps, like eating healthier and being more active, and larger steps like quitting smoking or using tobacco (see “My Action Plan” for ideas).

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aahealth/index.html>

2. <https://www.mindyourrisks.nih.gov/research.html>

3. <https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/index.htm>

# MY ACTION PLAN

My blood pressure today is:

My blood pressure should be:

I will check my blood pressure  
(how often):

My risk factors for high blood  
pressure, stroke, and dementia are:

(check all that apply)

- ☐ Age
- ☐ Race/ethnicity
- ☐ Family history or genetics
- ☐ Unhealthy diet
- ☐ Physical inactivity
- ☐ Being overweight
- ☐ Smoking or using tobacco
- ☐ Misusing alcohol
- ☐ Using illicit drugs
- ☐ High cholesterol
- ☐ Diabetes

Steps I will take to manage  
my risks are: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Manage high blood pressure
- ☐ Eat healthy
- ☐ Lower high cholesterol
- ☐ Keep active
- ☐ Quit smoking or using tobacco
- ☐ Avoid misusing alcohol
- ☐ Avoid using illicit drugs
- ☐ Manage my diabetes
- ☐ Take medicine as prescribed by  
my healthcare provider

Challenges that might get in my way  
of my action plan are:

I will stick to my action plan by:

My next visit with my healthcare  
provider is:

## TOOLS AND RESOURCES

There are many tools and resources to help you manage your risks for high blood pressure, stroke, and dementia.

- The **Mind Your Risks**<sup>®</sup> campaign ([mindyourrisks.nih.gov](http://mindyourrisks.nih.gov)) includes more information about the link between high blood pressure and increased risk of stroke and dementia, and ways to lower risks.
- The **National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute** ([nhlbi.nih.gov](http://nhlbi.nih.gov)) has information about high blood pressure and how to control it.
- The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** ([cdc.gov/bloodpressure](http://cdc.gov/bloodpressure)) provides a variety of articles and resources about preventing and managing high blood pressure to stay healthy.