

September 2014

Know your numbers

Keep track of your numbers for blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, and body mass index (BMI). These numbers can provide a glimpse of your health status and risk for certain diseases and conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and more. Be sure to ask your health care provider what tests you need and how often. If your numbers are too high or too low, he/she can make recommendations to help you get them to a healthier range.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/family/minutes/#numbers>

Know the facts about high cholesterol

You can take several steps to maintain a normal cholesterol level:

- Eat a healthy diet. A high amount of saturated fat and cholesterol in food that you eat can increase blood cholesterol. Tips on reducing saturated fat in your diet are available on the website for CDC's Division for Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity.
<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/saturatedfat.html>
- Maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight can increase your cholesterol level. Losing weight can help lower your LDL (bad) cholesterol and total cholesterol level, and raise your HDL (good) cholesterol level. CDC's Healthy Weight website includes information and tools to help you lose weight. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/index.html>
- Exercise regularly. Regular physical activity can help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol and raise HDL (good) cholesterol. You should try to be physically active for 2 hours and 30 minutes (150 minutes) each week. Visit CDC's Physical Activity website for more information on being active.
<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/index.html>
- Don't smoke. CDC's Office on Smoking and Health website has information on quitting smoking.
<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco>

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
http://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol/docs/ConsumerEd_Cholesterol.pdf

How is BMI calculated and interpreted?

Pounds and inches	<p>Formula: $\text{weight (lb)} / [\text{height (in)}]^2 \times 703$</p> <p>Calculate BMI by dividing weight in pounds (lbs) by height in inches (in) squared and multiplying by a conversion factor of 703.</p> <p>Example: Weight = 150 lbs, Height = 5'5" (65") Calculation: $[150 \div (65)^2] \times 703 = 24.96$</p>
--------------------------	--

The standard weight status categories associated with BMI ranges for adults are shown in the following table:

BMI	Weight status
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Normal
25.0 – 29.9	Overweight
30.0 and Above	Obese

Source: Centers and Disease Control and Prevention
http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/adult_bmi/index.html#Interpreted



How critical numbers are monitored

By drawing blood, your health care provider can conduct a blood lipid profile to check your blood cholesterol and glucose test to check your blood sugar. Your blood pressure and weight are even easier to check with a blood pressure monitor and scales, respectively.



Between doctor visits, you can monitor and track your blood sugar, blood pressure, and body weight. Easy-to-use home glucose monitors, blood pressure monitors, and bathroom scales are readily available at large discount retailers and pharmacies. By keeping track of your numbers on your own, you will be able to better manage your health.

Source: Copyright 2014 The American Heart Association
http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Diabetes/PreventionTreatmentofDiabetes/Know-Your-Health-Numbers_UCM_313882_Article.jsp

Target numbers

It is recommended that individuals keep these critical health numbers within the following ranges:

Critical Health Marker	Recommended Range
Blood sugar The amount of sugar (glucose) in the blood	Prediabetes HbA1c (glycosylated hemoglobin) less than 6% Diabetes HbA1c (glycosylated hemoglobin) less than 7% Pre-meal glucose – 70 to 130 mg/dL Post-meal peak glucose - <180 mg
Blood pressure The force of blood against the arteries when the heart beats and rests	Less than 130/80 mm Hg
Blood cholesterol A waxy substance produced by the liver	LDL cholesterol levels below 100 mg/dL HDL cholesterol level above 40 mg/dL for men and 50mg/dL for women Triglycerides below 100 mg/dL
Body weight	A body mass index (BMI) of 18.6-24.9 Waistline smaller than 35 inches for women and 40 inches for men

If your critical numbers are not at the target level, work with your health care provider to develop a plan to reach these goals.

Source: Copyright 2014 The American Heart Association
http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Diabetes/PreventionTreatmenttofDiabetes/Know-Your-Health-Numbers_UCM_313882_Article.jsp



Summer tomato, onion & cucumber salad

Description

Fresh wedges of tomato, thinly sliced onion and sliced cucumber dressed simply with vinegar and oil makes the most simple salad possible—think of it as the Southern counterpart to the classic Italian tomato-and-mozzarella salad. It is best enjoyed at the height of summer, when tomatoes and cucumbers are fresh from the garden.

Ingredients

3 tablespoons rice vinegar

1 tablespoon canola oil

1 teaspoon honey

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper, or more to taste

2 medium cucumbers

4 medium tomatoes, cut into 1/2-inch wedges

1 Vidalia or other sweet onion, halved and very thinly sliced

2 tablespoons coarsely chopped fresh herbs, such as flat-leaf parsley, chives and/or tarragon



Cooking Instructions

Whisk vinegar, oil, honey, salt and pepper in a large shallow bowl.

Remove alternating stripes of peel from the cucumbers. Slice the cucumbers into thin rounds. Add the cucumber slices, tomatoes and onion to the dressing; gently toss to combine. Let stand at room temperature for at least 30 minutes and up to 1 hour.

Just before serving, add herbs and toss again.

Cook's Tip

To make ahead, prepare through Step 2 up to 1 hour ahead.

Source: American Heart Association

http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/Recipes/Summer-Tomato-Onion-Cucumber-Salad_UCM_442663_Recipe.jsp