



Living Well North Tyneside

Supporting Health and Wellbeing

From September 9-15, 2024, Know Your Numbers Week will shine a spotlight on the critical importance of monitoring and managing your blood pressure. This week-long campaign is designed to encourage adults to take proactive steps to understand their blood pressure levels and make informed decisions to maintain their cardiovascular health. By participating in this awareness week, you can take significant steps towards better heart health and overall wellbeing.

Why Blood Pressure Matters

Understanding and managing your blood pressure is essential for maintaining good health. Here's why keeping an eye on your blood pressure is so important:

- **Early Detection:** High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, often develops silently without noticeable symptoms. Regular monitoring is crucial for early detection, allowing you to take action before it leads to more serious health issues. Early intervention can prevent complications and help you manage the condition effectively.
- **Health Risks:** Uncontrolled high blood pressure can have severe consequences, including an increased risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney damage, and other serious conditions. Elevated blood pressure puts extra strain on your heart and blood vessels, which can lead to significant health problems over time. Monitoring your blood pressure helps mitigate these risks by enabling timely and effective management.
- **Lifestyle Adjustments:** Knowing your blood pressure numbers provides valuable insight into your cardiovascular health and guides necessary lifestyle changes. For instance, if your numbers are high, you might need to make adjustments to your diet, increase physical activity, and manage stress more effectively. Understanding your readings helps you make informed decisions to improve your health.

How to Get Involved

Participating in Know Your Numbers Week is simple and impactful. Here's how you can get involved:

1. **Check Your Numbers Regularly:** Make a habit of monitoring your blood pressure using a home blood pressure monitor or by visiting your healthcare provider. Regular checks help track any changes and ensure your numbers stay within a healthy range. Many pharmacies and health clinics also offer blood pressure monitoring services.
2. **Understand Your Readings:** Blood pressure readings are expressed as two numbers: systolic (the top number) and diastolic (the bottom number). Systolic pressure measures the force of blood against the artery walls when your heart beats, while diastolic pressure measures the force when your heart is at rest between beats. Learn what these numbers mean and discuss them with your healthcare provider to understand your cardiovascular health better.
3. **Adopt Healthy Habits:** If your blood pressure readings are higher than recommended, take proactive steps to improve your health. This might include adopting a balanced diet, increasing physical activity, and finding effective ways to manage stress. Small changes in daily habits can have a significant impact on your blood pressure and overall health.

Key Actions for Healthy Blood Pressure

To maintain and improve your blood pressure, consider incorporating these key actions into your daily routine:

- **Eat Well:** Focus on a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Reduce your intake of sodium and processed foods, which can contribute to higher blood pressure. Foods high in potassium, such as bananas, potatoes, and spinach, can help balance blood pressure levels. Consider following the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet, which is specifically designed to help manage blood pressure.
- **Stay Active:** Engage in regular physical activity to support heart health. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week, such as brisk walking, jogging, cycling, or swimming. Regular exercise helps

strengthen your heart, improve blood circulation, and maintain a healthy weight—all of which contribute to better blood pressure control.

- **Avoid Harmful Habits:** Limit alcohol consumption and quit smoking, as both can negatively impact your blood pressure and cardiovascular health. Smoking damages blood vessels and raises blood pressure, while excessive alcohol intake can lead to increased blood pressure and other health issues. Managing stress through techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, or relaxation exercises can also contribute to healthier blood pressure levels.

The Role of Healthcare Providers

Healthcare providers play a crucial role in managing blood pressure and supporting heart health. Regular check-ups with your doctor can help monitor your blood pressure, evaluate your risk factors, and provide personalized advice on managing your health. If you have been prescribed medication for high blood pressure, adhere to your treatment plan and follow your healthcare provider's recommendations to achieve the best results.

Success Stories and Inspiration

Sharing success stories of individuals who have successfully managed their blood pressure through lifestyle changes and regular monitoring can provide motivation and inspiration. These stories highlight the positive impact of taking control of your health and encourage others to prioritise their cardiovascular wellbeing.

Know Your Numbers Week 2024 offers a valuable opportunity to focus on your cardiovascular health by monitoring and managing your blood pressure. By taking proactive steps to check your numbers, understanding your readings, and making necessary lifestyle adjustments, you can work towards a healthier future. Join us this September in promoting heart health and ensuring your blood pressure remains within a healthy range. Together, we can make a positive impact on our health and wellbeing.

Related Links

- [Know your numbers](#)

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