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We Love. We Care.
We Serve.**

At Commonwealth Senior Living, our true north is guided by these 4 meaningful connections to ensure we provide - *and you receive* - the absolute best.

We *listen* to your needs. We *love* what we do. We *care* about our residents', their families', and each other's comfort, well-being, and happiness. And we *serve* with dedication and compassion in all that we do. Our pineapple logo is a constant reminder of our commitment to making everyone feel welcome and at home.

**We invite you to learn more about the
Commonwealth Senior Living Difference.**

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Checking your blood pressure regularly as you age is important.

FELIKS SZEWczyk

High Blood Pressure Is a Major Health Problem in Older Adults

» BY JULIE ROSE

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a major health problem that is common in older adults.

Your vascular system, your body's network of blood vessels, changes as you age. Your arteries get stiffer, which causes your blood pressure to go up. Even if you have heart-healthy habits and feel fine, you can be at risk.

Affecting almost half of all adults, high blood pressure is referred to as "the silent killer." In many cases, high blood pressure doesn't cause signs of illness that you can see or feel - so many older adults are unaware they have it.

It's critical to know whether you have high blood pressure. And if you do it's very important to make the necessary lifestyle changes and take medication, if prescribed, to control it. Some of the recommended lifestyle changes include:

- Weight management
- Stop smoking
- Restrict salt intake
- Manage sleep apnea
- Exercise

High blood pressure that isn't controlled can lead to serious health problems, including heart disease, stroke, vascular dementia, eye problems and kidney disease. The good news is that it can be effectively controlled in most people.

What is considered normal blood pressure?

The pressure in the arteries during a heartbeat is the systolic blood pressure. This is the first, or top, number. The second, or bottom, number, the diastolic pressure, is the measure of the pressure in the arteries when the heart rests between beats.

For most adults, normal blood pressure is defined as a systolic pressure (first/top number) of less than 120 and a diastolic pressure (second/bottom number) of less than 80.



JULIE ROSE

What is elevated blood pressure?

Elevated blood pressure is defined as a systolic pressure between 120 and 129 and a diastolic pressure of less than 80.

What is considered high blood pressure?

High blood pressure has a systolic pressure of 130 or higher and a diastolic pressure of 80 or higher.

In many older adults, the systolic pressure is 130 or higher, but the diastolic pressure is less than 80. This is called isolated systolic hypertension caused by the age-related stiffening of the major arteries.

This is the most common form of high blood pressure in older adults. It can lead to serious health problems, as well as cause shortness of breath during light physical activity, lightheadedness when standing quickly, and falls.

It's important to visit your doctor regularly and have your blood pressure checked. If necessary, you and your doctor can develop a plan to manage your blood pressure.

Julie Rose is CEO of Paladin Life Care providing care and advocacy for senior clients and those with disabilities in Virginia, the District of Columbia and Maryland. For additional information, email info@paladinlifecare.com or call (703) 879-6992.