

## February is Heart Month

One in three Americans have high blood pressure. High blood pressure means that the heart is working too hard to do its job. Regardless of race, age or gender, anyone can develop high blood pressure. This condition is often called the silent killer because it typically does not show any warning signs before the damage to the body is done. Over time, high blood pressure could be in the process of causing a stroke, heart attack, hardening of the arteries, kidney damage or even blindness.

### What contributes to high blood pressure?

#### Controllable:

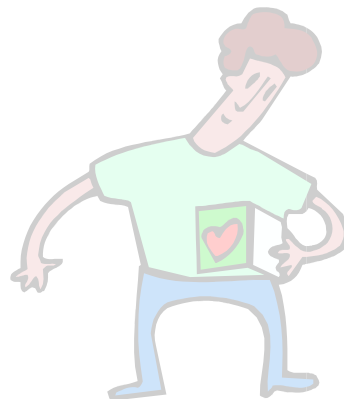
- Obesity
- Sodium consumption
- Alcohol consumption
- Oral contraceptives
- Lack of exercise
- Smoking
- Poor diet
- Stress

#### Uncontrollable:

- Age
- Heredity
- Race- African Americans are at a greater risk
- Gender- varies by age and ethnicity

### Prevention:

1. Maintain ideal weight.
2. Eat healthier.
3. Be active.
4. Limit alcohol intake to 1 ounce or less per day.
5. Stop smoking.
6. Reduce stress.
7. Monitor blood pressure regularly.



### Been diagnosed with high blood pressure? Now what!

High blood pressure can usually be managed through lifestyle changes and, when prescribed, medication. Because blood pressure can fluctuate, home monitoring and recording of blood pressure readings can indicate if your treatment plan is working.

Contact the Macomb County Health Department Cardiovascular Program for additional questions about your heart health. Visit the [CVDRRP web page](#) or call them at 586-412-3387.

Source: American Heart Association