

**Antelope Valley Union High School District
Facts about Blood Pressure**

Blood Pressure

The force of the blood pressure pushing with each beat against the walls of the arteries that carry blood away from the heart. Blood pressure changes during the day. It is lowest during sleep and rises when you awaken and move around. It also rises when someone is upset, excited, nervous, or very active.

The Blood Pressure Reading

- Systolic blood pressure – when blood pressure is at its highest while the heart is beating and pumping blood. This is the top or first number in the blood pressure reading.
- Diastolic blood pressure – when the blood pressure is at its lowest while the heart is at rest between beats. This is the bottom or second number in the blood pressure reading.
- A normal blood pressure is when the top or systolic blood pressure is below 120 and the bottom or diastolic is below 80. The blood pressure is measured in millimeter of mercury (mmHg).

Risks of High Blood Pressure

- Damage to the arteries as a result of the heart having to work harder
- Stroke or bleeding in the brain
- Heart attack
- Kidney problems
- High blood pressure crisis which is a steep rise in the blood pressure causing rapid damage to the brain, heart, lungs, nervous system, blood vessels, and kidneys

What does High Blood Pressure Crisis look like?

- Extremely high blood pressure that is above either 180 systolic or 110 diastolic
- Severe headache
- Blurred vision
- Severe anxiety
- Shortness of breath or inability and speak at the same time
- Chest or back pain
- Nausea or vomiting
- Nosebleeds
- Seizures
- Confusion or decrease alertness and awareness or unresponsiveness

Documentation

- Document the student's blood pressure, each time it is taken, on the Dysreflexia Blood Pressure Log.
- Discuss readings with District Nurse.

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