

## Millions more have high blood pressure

16th November, 2017



Millions more people around the world have high blood pressure. This news came earlier this week when the American Heart Association (AHA) changed the numbers at which high blood pressure starts. For many decades, doctors said high blood pressure started at a reading of 140 over 90. The AHA has changed this and said the disease should be treated sooner. It said high blood pressure now starts at a reading of 130 over 80\*. Blood pressure happens when your heart pushes blood around your body too fast. If this pushing is too strong, it can put stress on your heart and arteries. This can lead to heart attacks and strokes. Normal blood pressure is less than 120 over 80.

AHA doctors said health problems can happen at the lower figures of 130 over 80. However, they said it is possible for people to deal with this level of blood pressure without taking medicine. They said the new reading is, "a yellow light that you need to be lowering your blood pressure, mainly with non-drug approaches". People with high blood pressure need to make healthy lifestyle changes. These include losing weight, exercising more, eating healthier food, avoiding alcohol and salt, quitting smoking and avoiding stress. The new reading of 130 over 80 now means that nearly half (46 per cent) of the adult population of the USA has high blood pressure. This rose from 32 per cent using the old numbers.

\* Written as 130/80

Sources: [medicalxpress.com](http://medicalxpress.com) / [Bloomberg.com](http://Bloomberg.com) / [newsday.com](http://newsday.com)

## Writing

Schools should teach children about the dangers of high blood pressure. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

millions / high blood pressure / numbers / disease / body / stress / heart attacks / health problems / figures / medicine / drug / lifestyle / losing weight / alcohol / adult

## True / False

- The article says a million more people have high blood pressure. T / F
- The American Heart Association said high blood pressure is 140/90. T / F
- High blood pressure is because blood travels around your body too fast. T / F
- High blood pressure leads to heart attacks but not strokes. T / F
- Health problems can start at a blood pressure of 130/80. T / F
- A heart association said a 130/80 reading was like a red warning light. T / F
- People with high blood pressure need to eat less salt. T / F
- Nearly half of adults in the USA now have high blood pressure. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <b>world</b>    | a. for the most part |
| 2. <b>reading</b>  | b. result in         |
| 3. <b>treated</b>  | c. numbers           |
| 4. <b>happens</b>  | d. almost            |
| 5. <b>lead to</b>  | e. figure            |
| 6. <b>figures</b>  | f. keeping away from |
| 7. <b>mainly</b>   | g. occurs            |
| 8. <b>avoiding</b> | h. globe             |
| 9. <b>nearly</b>   | i. increased         |
| 10. <b>rose</b>    | j. cared for         |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you know about high blood pressure?
- Do you ever worry about your blood pressure?
- Why can't doctors cure high blood pressure?
- What do you do to look after your heart?
- Why is high blood pressure called 'the silent killer'?
- What do we do that puts pressure on our heart?
- How healthy are you?
- What would it be like to be a doctor?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. the numbers at which high blood pressure | a. and salt         |
| 2. the disease should be                    | b. on your heart    |
| 3. it can put stress                        | c. changes          |
| 4. This can lead                            | d. than 120 over 80 |
| 5. Normal blood pressure is less            | e. the old numbers  |
| 6. it is possible for people to deal        | f. treated sooner   |
| 7. without taking                           | g. with this level  |
| 8. make healthy lifestyle                   | h. starts           |
| 9. avoiding alcohol                         | i. medicine         |
| 10. This rose from 32 per cent using        | j. to heart attacks |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why is high blood pressure dangerous?
- What causes high blood pressure?
- What do you think of taking medicine?
- What do you need to change to be healthier?
- How stressful is your life?
- What can we do to reduce stress?
- What questions would you like to ask the doctors?

## Spelling

- nimsolil more people
- for many cdedes
- the iseaeds should be treated sooner
- it can put erssts on your heart
- This can lead to heart tacatks
- narolm blood pressure
- problems can happen at the lower ifsegur
- without taking idinceem
- make healthy esefyitll changes
- dvaniigo alcohol and salt
- anyerl half
- 46 per cent of the adult oaiptopuln

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. j	4. g	5. b
6. c	7. a	8. f	9. d	10. i

## Role Play

### Role A – Losing Weight

You think losing weight is the best way to stay healthy. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): a vegetarian diet, eight hours sleep or an active brain.

### Role B – Vegetarian Diet

You think a vegetarian diet is the best way to stay healthy. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): losing weight, eight hours sleep or an active brain.

### Role C – Eight Hours Sleep

You think eight hours sleep is the best way to stay healthy. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): a vegetarian diet, losing weight or an active brain.

### Role D – An Active Brain

You think an active brain is the best way to stay healthy. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): a vegetarian diet, eight hours sleep or losing weight.

## Speaking – Health

Rank these with your partner. Put the best ways to stay healthy at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| • losing weight   | • lots of laughter         |
| • much less salt  | • lots of fruit            |
| • vegetarian diet | • no bad habits            |
| • 8 hours sleep   | • keeping the brain active |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.