

- Cardiovascular diseases

Checking your blood pressure might just save your life

More than 12 million people in England suffer from high blood pressure or hypertension with more than four million of those unaware they even have it. It is the leading cause of cardiovascular disease (CVD) and if left untreated it increases the risk of s

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“Over a quarter of adults have high blood pressure although many will not realise due to a lack of noticeable symptoms. If left untreated it increases your risk of serious problems such as heart attacks and strokes. The only way to find out if your blood pressure is high is to have your blood



pressure checked.”

High blood pressure is the leading cause of CVD and can also impact on such conditions as dementia and type 2 diabetes.

It is often called the ‘silent killer’ because if you have high blood pressure, you may not even know about it until you have a heart attack or a stroke.

If you have high blood pressure, reducing it even by a small amount can help lower your risk of these serious and potentially life-threatening health conditions.

That is why it is vital you get your blood pressure checked ... it just might save your life!

It is a simple process, the best way to find out whether you are at risk, and all adults aged over 40 are advised to have their blood pressure checked at least every five years.

You can get your blood pressure tested at a number of places, including many pharmacies, your GP surgery, as well as in some workplaces.

You can also check it yourself with a home blood pressure monitor.

There are a range of monitors available and prices start at £20. It is important that the one you choose is accurate and the right one for you. Ask your GP practice or pharmacist or check out the advice on the British Heart Foundation website.

The cause of high blood pressure is not always known, but things that may increase your risk include having an unhealthy diet, being overweight, not exercising enough, not getting enough sleep and smoking. The good news is that making healthy lifestyle changes can help reduce your chances of getting high blood pressure and help lower your blood pressure if it’s already high.

What works best is different for each person and some people with high blood pressure may need to take medicine to stop their blood pressure getting too high.

Talking to your pharmacist or GP surgery can help you decide your best treatment.

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