

May
2018

New Blood Pressure Guidelines

“Creating Smiles,
Changing Faces

Blood Pressure	Systolic mm Hg (upper number)		Diastolic mm Hg (lower number)
Normal	Less Than 120	and	Less Than 80
Elevated	120-129	and	Less Than 80
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage I	130-139	or	80-89
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage II	140 Or Higher	or	90 Or Higher
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS EMERGENCY	Higher Than 180	And/or	Higher Than 120



Stroke at 55 years of age

In November 2017, the American Heart Association (AHA) made changes to the definition and classification of hypertension in the United States. The recommended blood pressure (BP) reading for adults is 130/80 millimeters of mercury for the average adult. Thus, 46 % of the US adult population will be classified as having hypertension. Perhaps what is noteworthy here is that this ruling applies to people 21 years of age and older. This means 1 in 4 of all men and 1 in 5 of all women older than 20 years of age are unaware, not treated or do not have their hypertension well-controlled by medication. Dentists can identify their patients with regular blood pressure readings at their visits and help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease [CVD], stroke, heart failure, blindness and chronic kidney diseases. BP readings of 140/90 mm Hg are at a risk of developing cardiovascular disease [CVD]. This really starts at 115/75 mm Hg and doubles for every incremental increase of 20/10 mm Hg. An elevated systolic BP rather than the diastolic BP is considered to be a greater risk of developing CVD. Dental treatment is considered to be unsafe at a BP of 180/110 mm Hg. Bare in mind if a patient is in dental pain, has facial swelling, or in an acute jaw-lock position that any of these factors could contribute to an elevation in the systolic blood pressure. Also, during the administration of a local anesthetic, the epinephrine into a vascular area could elevate the BP too! Careful aspiration and limiting the various concentrations of epinephrine in the local anesthetics needs to be monitored as well. You and your staff could help recognize and prevent someone from having a major medical event that could affect the quality of life for that person and their family.

Another silent killer to be aware of is Atrial Fibrillation (also called AFib or AF) which is a quivering or irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia) that can lead to blood clots, stroke, heart failure and other heart-related problems. It is estimated that there are 2.7 million Americans are living unknowingly with it. About 15% of runners or athletes have this condition due to stress on the heart valves that are leaking over time due to age and intensity of the activity. Again, the person or athlete may have no symptoms. Others may or can experience one or more of the following:

- **Rapid and irregular heart beat**
- **Fluttering or “thumping” in the chest**
- **Dizziness**
- **Shortness of breath, weakness and anxiety**
- * **Faintness or confusion**
- * **Fatigue when exercising**
- * **Sweating**
- * **Chest pain or pressure**