

## 5. CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol isn't all bad, it's a type of fat that's actually a nutrient!!!



As you have probably heard, there is “good” cholesterol and “bad” cholesterol. When we measure cholesterol and blood fats, we’re really talking about three different numbers: HDL, LDL, and triglycerides.

They combine to give you a “lipid profile” score, but the three individual scores are most important. Too much bad cholesterol can lead to a hardening of the arteries. To test cholesterol levels, see a doctor or health professional who can administer a simple blood test.

### Take Action Tidbits

Here are the numbers to strive for:

- Total cholesterol of 200 mg/dL or lower.
- HDL (“good” cholesterol) of 50 mg/dL or higher, if you’re a woman, or 40 mg/dL or higher, if you’re a man.
- Optimal LDL is 100 or lower. If you have other major risk factors, like pre-existing cardiovascular disease or diabetes, your doctor may want your LDL closer to 70.
- Triglycerides of less than 150 mg/dL.
- LDL is the number most doctors and heart health programs focus on in particular. Every single point of LDL decrease makes a difference. If your LDL is at 140 and you get it down to 130, that’s great, even if you haven’t reached optimum levels yet.

## 6. FASTING BLOOD SUGAR

- Testing the fasting blood sugar (FBS) assesses the risk for diabetes. A fasting blood sugar (taken when one hasn’t eaten for 12 hours) should be below 100 mg/dL. Diabetes is a chronic disease that can lead to blindness, cardiac disease, kidney failure, nerve problems and an impaired immune system. Fasting is key since ingesting food—say, a banana an hour beforehand—would raise blood sugar levels and could create a false pre-diabetic or diabetic reading. FBS can be determined with a simple blood test or a finger stick test.

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- A fasting blood sugar number above 100 is considered pre-diabetic; treatment measures should be discussed with a physician.

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS	
Factor	Goal
<b>Total Cholesterol</b>	Less than 200 mg/dL
• LDL (“Bad”) Cholesterol	LDL cholesterol goals vary.
• HDL (“Good”) Cholesterol	50 mg/dL or higher
• Triglycerides	≥150 mg/dL
<b>Blood Pressure</b>	≥120/80 mmHg
<b>Fasting Blood Sugar</b>	≥100 mg/dL
<b>Body Mass Index (BMI)</b>	≥25 Kg/m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Waist Circumference</b>	≥35 inches women ≥40 inches men
<b>Physical Activity</b>	Minimum of 30 minutes most days, if not all days of the week

### Citations:

(Oliveros, E., Somers, V. K., Sochor, O., Goel, K., & Lopez-Jimenez, F. (2014). The concept of normal weight obesity. *Progress in cardiovascular diseases*, 56(4), 426-433.)

Ways to measure body fat percentage (<http://dailyburn.com/life/health/how-to-measure-body-fat-percentage/>)

Online calculator for online version: ([https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose\\_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm))



# KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

Are you at risk for diabetes, heart disease and other chronic diseases?

And how do you know?

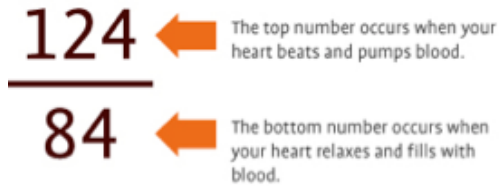
There is a system of “numbers” we can use to tell us how we compare to the health standards. By knowing our numbers, we can take action to make changes that will help prevent the onset of chronic health conditions. To begin taking charge of our own health, there are 6 crucial numbers we need to know. It is important to Make knowing them our mantra and we’ll be on the road to healthier, longer lives.



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA  
Department of Health

## 1. BLOOD PRESSURE

- According to the 2014 STEPS Adult Health Survey, 33% of Bermudians reported having high blood pressure, also called hypertension.
- This is one of the strongest markers for heart disease risk. It is measured as two numbers, Systolic (top number) and Diastolic (bottom number).



### Take Action Tidbits

- Normal blood pressure is below 120/80
- Get tested at a local Health Centre or at a pharmacy.
- Learn how to test your own blood pressure and invest in a device you can use at home.
- Get in the habit of testing your blood pressure at least once a month. Make sure each time to test it at the same point in the day, when you're most relaxed.
- No caffeine/tobacco or exercise 30 minutes prior to measurement. Rested for five minutes, seated in a comfortable chair. Arm at heart level; back supported and feet on the ground; arm is bare and room is warm and quiet.

## 2. WAIST CIRCUMFERENCE

- Waistline is an important factor contributing to chronic diseases, which is why larger waistlines can increase the risk for chronic disease and premature death.
- Waist circumference is important because belly fat, – sends out a toxic stream of chemicals impacting the whole body.

Health Risk	Women	Men
Low Risk	Below 31.5 inches	Below 37 inches
Moderate Risk	Below 35 inches	Below 40 inches
High Risk	Above 35 inches	Above 40.2 inches

### Take Action Tidbits

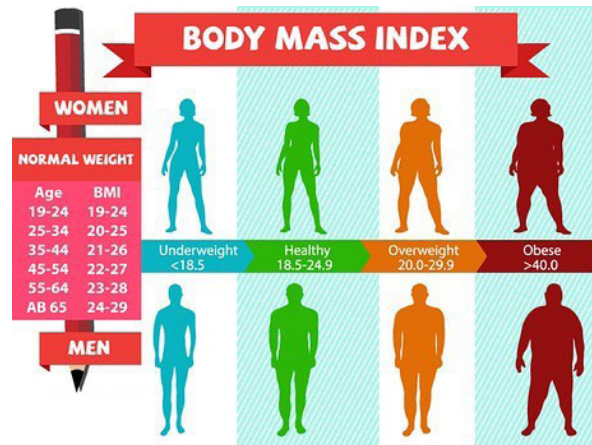
- Take your waist size once each month with a measuring tape.
- Measure at your natural waistline, which is above your hipbone and below the ribcage – not where your belt lies or around your hips.

## 3. BODY MASS INDEX (BMI)

Overweight and obesity can cause a slew of health problems such as cardiovascular disease, gastro esophageal reflux disease (GERD), gout, hypertension, high blood pressure and cancer. The BMI is calculated from two other numbers that you probably know – your weight and height.

The BMI is a useful measurement for obesity. It is based on your weight and height. To manually calculate your BMI use the following formula:

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{(\text{weight in pounds} \times 703)}{\text{Height in inches}^2}$$



### Take Action Tidbits

- Write your weight down monthly. Studies show that by tracking this number, you'll do a better job keeping it down.
- BMI is one way to gauge classification of weight, however, it is not a perfect measure. In people with above normal muscle mass, like bodybuilders, the BMI may indicate the individual is overweight when they

## 4. BODY FAT PERCENTAGE

Body fat percentage is a good indicator of true obesity. Obesity is an increasing global health issue and can be measured in several ways. Body fat percentage is also a good indicator for "normal weight obesity". Normal weight obesity is the presence of high body fat but with the appearance of normal weight. Keeping up with body fat percentage is a good method in helping to prevent or manage chronic diseases.



### Take Action Tidbits

There are several ways to check body fat, some of these methods can be done by a medical practitioner or by yourself; it is dependent upon access to measuring devices. For example:

- **Skin caliper** which requires another person to help, and is done by pinching different parts of the body and using a caliper to measure the folds. Next, one would put the numbers into the body fat percentage formula.
- **Bioelectrical Impedance**, is the resistance to electrical current as it travels through body fluid and tissue. This method is painless and can range from being a scale with electrodes under each foot or a scale with handholds with electrodes. You can visit your doctor for this method or any place that may have access to such scales, like a gym.