



October 2019 Blood Pressure Awareness

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Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge

This quarter, we will be focusing on blood pressure for the 4th Annual Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge. October 7 through November 22, take your blood pressure at least 15 times for a chance to win one of three prize drawings, including the competitive department challenge (prizes to be announced soon!). Logs are included on the back of this newsletter, as well as on the Wellness Website under the *Blood Pressure* tab.

High blood pressure (hypertension) is known as the silent killer since there are no symptoms and most people do not realize they have it until something worse occurs, such as a heart attack or stroke. High blood pressure that is allowed to exist for years without treatment causes permanent damage to the heart, kidneys, and small blood vessels throughout the body. By checking blood pressure during the challenge, participants have shared that, although their blood pressure levels have always been normal, they were surprised to learn they have hypertension now; and one young participant shared how he would have never checked his blood pressure without the challenge due to his age, and discovered he had hypertension. So, please take the next few weeks to take a few blood pressure readings to see where you stand (and maybe win a prize drawing too!).

Penny will be meeting with departments in October to check blood pressures, and she has automatic cuffs available to loan to departments.



Posture, Balance, and Falls Prevention

Good Posture. We always think about sitting or standing 'nice and tall,' straightening the back and looking up. There is a little more to the puzzle than throwing shoulders back and standing up straight. On October 21, the Posture, Balance, and Falls Prevention Program will begin and will look at what makes up a good posture, how to determine if we have one, and how a 'bad' posture affects our balance and stability. Each week through December, we will focus on a different topic, with information posted on the Wellness website and also offered as lunch and learns in November & December.



So, to begin, try a little exercise: stand normally in front of a mirror and answer these questions:

- Is your head tilted to the left or right? (if you can't tell in the mirror, old pictures will give you away)
- Is one shoulder higher than the other? Does one shoulder seem closer to the mirror?
- Are your thumbs pointed toward the mirror or the back of your hands?
- Are your hips even? Does it seem like your upper body is tilted towards one side?
- Are your toes pointed straight ahead? Turned out? Turned In?

Your answers to these questions can help determine how your posture is doing. More signs come from a sideways and back view. Stay tuned for the lessons in November to find out what they all mean!

Activity OR Blood Pressure Log

- Physical Activity: On the calendar below, record your physical activity in minutes, steps, or miles and record the total after each week to figure your monthly grand total. OR
- Blood Pressure: Take your blood pressure at least once per week and record it on the calendar below. See the activity and blood pressure charts below to check your category.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
		1	2	3	4	5	<u>Total</u>
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	<u>Total</u>
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	<u>Total</u>
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	<u>Total</u>
27	28	29	30	31			<u>Total</u>
						OCTOBER	<u>Grand Total:</u>

F.Y.I.

During the blood pressure challenge, I encourage all participants to log their blood pressure, which can be recorded on the calendar above or recorded on a blood pressure log posted under the *Blood Pressure* tab. By logging your blood pressure at least 15 times during the challenge, not only will it give you a good idea where your blood pressure level is, but it will also make you eligible to win one of 3 prize drawings! You can use your own cuff at home or work, one at a store or pharmacy, or have Penny or a medical professional take your reading.

I am happy to still accept physical activity logs as credit for participation too!

While it is normal for blood pressure to be higher than normal every once in a while, if your blood pressure is consistently in the:

- Stage 1 Category: speak with your doctor.
- Stage 2 Category: See your doctor ASAP
- Crisis Category: Seek medical attention immediately

* BP Category

Normal less than 120 less than 80
Elevated 120-129 less than 80
Stage 1 130-139 80-89
Stage 2 140 or higher 90 or higher
EMERGENCY Higher than 180 Higher than 120

* New 2017 Standards