

**HEALTH &
WELLNESS**

FIRST MUTUAL
HEALTH

**Your health after
COVID**

What is Wellness

Health Quotes



Your Health After COVID-19 “Hypertension the Silent Killer”!

COVID-19 has arguably taken the limelight over the past few years, regardless, it is important to talk about health during and after the pandemic. Non-communicable diseases continue to be on an upward trend within societal circles with health conditions such as hypertension (high blood pressure), cancer, diabetes fast becoming the leading causes of poor health among individuals.

What are non-communicable diseases?

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), also known as chronic diseases, are non-transmissible diseases of often long duration and include mental health conditions, stroke, heart disease, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung diseases.

NCDs affect people of all ages, their causes are variable and may be triggered by environmental and genetic factors. Today's focus is on Hypertension.

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What is Hypertension, how is it measured?

Hypertension, (elevated blood pressure) the silent killer, commonly known as BP is a condition that has affected many people mostly unexpectedly and unknown to the patient. This can be dangerous as high BP can lead to life-threatening conditions for example; heart attack or stroke. The body uses blood pressure to pump blood to the body, where the blood supplies oxygen, nutrients and takes away waste products from organs.

During a BP test, a healthcare professional places an inflatable cuff on the patient's arm using a pressure-measuring gauge, which is then inflated to gently tighten on the arm. It helps to be relaxed, preferable sitting rather than lying down. Two consistent blood pressure measurements are needed to estimate blood pressure, and more are recommended if there is variation in the pressure.

When taking a blood pressure reading, it's expressed as a measurement with two numbers, one number on top (systolic) and one on the bottom (diastolic), like a fraction.

For example, 120/80 mm Hg. BP is measured in millimeters of mercury. The systolic pressure (the top number) is the pressure of the blood in the arteries when a heart contracts or beats. The diastolic pressure (the bottom number) is the pressure of blood in arteries between beats, when a heart relaxes.

For a normal reading, the blood pressure needs to show:

- a systolic pressure between 90 mm Hg and 120 mm Hg, and
- a diastolic pressure between 60 mm Hg and 80 mm Hg,

When assessing the cardiovascular risk, the average blood pressure at separate visits is more accurate than measurements taken at a single visit.

What determines the diagnosis of are at least three elevated readings taken at least one week apart.

Know Your High BP Risk Factors

- Age, the risk of high blood pressure increases as you age.
- Family history, through heredity people with a family history of high blood pressure pass it on.
- Being overweight and not being physically active.
- Using tobacco. Not only does smoking or chewing tobacco immediately raise your blood pressure temporarily, but the chemicals in tobacco can damage the lining of your artery walls. This can cause your arteries to narrow and increase your risk of heart disease.
- Too much salt (sodium) in your diet can cause your body to retain fluid, which increases blood pressure.
- Too little potassium in your diet, potassium helps balance the amount of sodium in your cells. A proper balance of potassium is critical for good heart health. Bananas are a good source of potassium.
- Drinking too much alcohol, for men consuming more than 4 units on any day or more than 14 units per week. For women, consuming more than 3 units on any day or more than 7 units per week. One unit is equal to 10 ml of 100% alcohol (or 25 ml of 40% alcohol, or 200 ml of 5% alcohol).
- High levels of stress can lead to a temporary increase in blood pressure. Stress-related habits such as eating more, using tobacco, or drinking alcohol can lead to further increases in blood pressure.
- Certain chronic conditions, for example kidney disease, diabetes, and sleep apnea. At times, pregnancy may predispose mothers to high blood pressure.

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Know Your High BP Risk Factors

When your BP is extremely high, there may be certain symptoms to look out for. These are severe headaches, nosebleed, fatigue or confusion, vision problems, chest pain, difficulty in breathing, irregular heartbeat, blood in the urine and pounding in your chest, neck, or ears. Uncontrolled high BP can lead to complications, the common complications include:

- Heart attack or stroke.
- Aneurysm. Increased blood pressure can cause your blood vessels to weaken and bulge, forming an aneurysm. If an aneurysm ruptures, it can be life-threatening.
- Heart failure- thickened muscle of the heart may have a hard time pumping enough blood to meet your body's needs, which can lead to heart failure.
- Weakened and narrowed blood vessels in your kidneys. This can prevent these organs from functioning normally.
- Thickened, narrowed or torn blood vessels in the eyes. This can result in vision loss.
- Metabolic syndrome. This syndrome is a group of disorders of your body's metabolism, including increased waist size, high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure and high insulin levels.

- Trouble with memory or understanding. Uncontrolled high blood pressure may also affect your ability to think, remember and learn.
- Dementia. Narrowed or blocked arteries can limit blood flow to the brain, leading to a certain type of dementia (vascular dementia). A stroke that interrupts blood flow to the brain also can cause vascular dementia.

Lifestyle Changes to Prevent Hypertension

- Try the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet, which emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, poultry, fish and low-fat dairy foods. These gives one plenty of potassium, which can help prevent and control high blood pressure.
- Decrease the salt in your diet. While you can reduce the amount of salt you eat by putting down the saltshaker, you generally should also pay attention to the amount of salt that's in the processed foods you eat.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Keeping a healthy weight or losing weight if you're overweight can help you control your high blood pressure and lower your risk of related health problems.

Lifestyle Changes to Prevent Hypertension

- Don't smoke. Tobacco can injure blood vessel walls and speed up the process of buildup of plaque in the arteries. If you smoke, ask your doctor to help you quit.
- Manage stress, reduce stress as much as possible. Practice healthy coping techniques, such as muscle relaxation, deep breathing, or mindfulness. Getting regular physical activity and plenty of sleep can help, too.
- Practice relaxation or slow, deep breathing. Practice taking deep, slow breaths to help relax. Some research shows that slow, paced breathing (five to seven deep breaths per minute) combined with mindfulness techniques can reduce blood pressure. According to the American Heart Association, device-guided breathing may be a reasonable non drug option for lowering blood pressure, especially if you have anxiety with high blood pressure or can't tolerate standard treatments well.
- Monitor your blood pressure at home. Home blood pressure monitoring allows you to keep a daily log of blood pressure measurements. Your doctor can review the information to determine if your medication is working or if you're having complications. Home blood pressure monitoring isn't a substitute for visits to your doctor. Even if you get normal readings, don't stop, or change your medications or alter your diet without talking to your doctor first.

Early diagnosis and heart-healthy lifestyle changes can keep high BP from seriously damaging your health.



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What is Wellness?

Wellness is the act of practicing healthy habits on a daily basis to attain better physical and mental health outcomes, so that instead of just surviving, you're thriving. To understand the significance of wellness, it's important to understand how it's linked to health. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health is defined as being "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

Several key areas of your lifestyle are considered dimensions of overall Wellness. They include: social connectedness, exercise, nutrition, sleep and mindfulness. Each one has an impact on your physical and mental health. By making simple and healthy choices on a daily basis, you will be well on your way towards reducing stress, having positive social interactions and achieving optimal wellness.

Start with small changes within each dimension and take it one day at a time – you don't have to run a marathon or go on a restrictive diet to implement wellness into your everyday life! We've listed a few examples for each dimension:

Social Connectedness.

Connecting with friends or loved ones is a great way to help improve your physical and mental health. Take 10 minutes out of your day to call someone you've been thinking about. This is a great way to connect and catch up with the people that matter the most to you.

Exercise.

Even 20 or 30 minutes of daily exercise can have a positive impact on your overall sense of well-being and help improve your mood. Don't know where to start? Try a brisk walk on your lunch break or opt for the stairs instead of the elevator when you can.

Nutrition.

By adding wholesome ingredients to your plate, you'll be taking steps towards becoming a healthier you. Some food for thought: pack an apple and some raw veggies in your bag to keep as a handy snack. This may help you avoid vending machines or fast food when you're on the go.

Sleep

Consider your sleep hygiene. Avoid caffeine after 12pm, include quiet and calm activities before going to bed, and wake up at the same time every day – these are simple ways you can begin your journey towards becoming a successful sleeper

Mindfulness

Did you know that practicing mindfulness is good for the body and mind, helps with focus and also changes the brain? Take a moment right now to consider your own mind and how you are feeling. The more you tap into your own thoughts, the more you may become aware of how you react to stressful events – so start practicing mindfulness today!

Please consult your physician before following a wellness program, as results may vary.

Source: [Pfizer.com](https://www.pfizer.com)

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Inspirational Health Quotes

As the old saying goes, “If you have good health, you have everything.” Many people don’t appreciate their health until they aren’t well. By then, the poor eating, missed sleep, and lack of exercise catches up and then you can’t do much of anything until you recover. Sometimes a reminder of how important health is can be helpful in motivating individuals to healthier behaviors.

These quotes will support the notion that health really is everything.

1. “Time and health are two precious assets that we don’t recognise and appreciate until they have been depleted.” – Denis Waitley
2. “A healthy outside starts from the inside.” – Robert Urich
3. “A fit body, a calm mind, a house full of love. These things cannot be bought – they must be earned.” – Naval Ravikant
4. “The wish for healing has always been half of health.” – Lucius Annaeus Seneca
5. “A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor’s book.” – Irish proverb
6. “The more you understand yourself, the more silence there is, the healthier you are.” – Maxime Lagacé
7. “Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.” – Hippocrates
8. “To ensure good health: eat lightly, breathe deeply, live moderately, cultivate cheerfulness, and maintain an interest in life.” – William Londen
9. “Physical fitness is the first requisite of happiness.” – Joseph Pilates
10. “I have chosen to be happy because it is good for my health.” – Voltaire
11. “A sad soul can be just as lethal as a germ.” – John Steinbeck
12. “Healthy citizens are the greatest asset any country can have.” – Winston Churchill
13. “Good health is not something we can buy. However, it can be an extremely valuable savings account.” – Anne Wilson Schaef
14. “He who has health has hope, and he who has hope has everything.” – Thomas Carlyle
15. “Health is not valued until sickness comes.” – Thomas Fuller
16. “You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough.” – Mae West
17. “Your body hears everything your mind says.” – Naomi Judd
18. “Success is getting what you want, happiness is wanting what you get.” – W.P. Kinsella
19. “Good health and good sense are two of life’s greatest blessings.” – Publilius Syrus
20. “A fit, healthy body — that is the best fashion statement.” – Jess C. Scott
21. “I believe that the greatest gift you can give your family and the world is a healthy you.” – Joyce Meyer

“WALK THE TALK, HEALTH FOR ALL”

First Mutual Health Services is **“Walking the Talk”** by bringing affordable healthcare services through its growing network of pharmacies and clinics.

Since its establishment in 2021 the organisation has managed to open two clinics and three pharmacies in Zimbabwe that are offering a shortfall free experience to medical aid members and affordable charges to cash patients.

Our facilities are located in the following towns:

- **Harare Clinic:** 9 George Silundika, Ground Floor
- **Gweru Clinic:** 1 Lobengula Avenue, opposite Aviation Museum
- **Harare Pharmacy:** 3 Corner Building, Corner 2nd Street & Robert Mugabe
- **Gweru Pharmacy:** 7 Bahadur Centre, Main Street between Robert Mugabe & Lobengula Avenue
- **Bulawayo Pharmacy:** 93 Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Street, First Mutual Centre, between 9th & 10th Avenue

Our clinics offer the following services:

- General Consultations
- Minor Procedures
- All Medical Exams
- Vaccinations
- Day Care/Observations

Our Pharmacies provide the following:

- Prescription Medication
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- Health and Cosmetic Products

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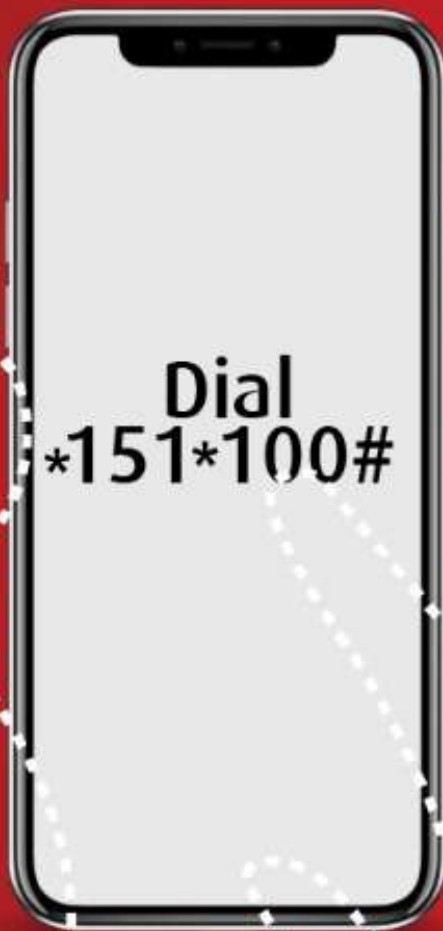
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