



# The 2025 American Heart Association, American College of Cardiology, and AMA Hypertension Guidelines

## High Blood Pressure: What Patients Should Know (2025 Update)

High blood pressure (hypertension) affects more than 115 million adults in the U.S. It increases the risk for heart attack, stroke, heart failure, kidney disease, and dementia. I have summarized the 2025 guidelines for you which provides new updates to help patients manage high BP more effectively. Dr. Vakili

### Blood Pressure Categories

- Normal: Less than 120/80 mmHg
- Elevated: 120–129 systolic and less than 80 diastolic
- Stage 1 Hypertension: 130–139 systolic or 80–89 diastolic
- Stage 2 Hypertension: 140/90 or higher

### Blood Pressure Goals

- Goal for all patients: Less than 130/80 mmHg
- Ideally: Less than 120 systolic, if safe for you

### Lowering BP Helps the Brain

Controlling blood pressure doesn't just protect the heart—it also reduces the risk of dementia by 12–19%. Adults with hypertension should aim for systolic BP under 130 to help protect memory and brain health.

### Urine Albumin-to-Creatinine Ratio (UACR) Test

The 2025 guidelines recommend that every patient newly diagnosed with hypertension have a urine albumin-to-creatinine ratio (UACR) test. This test provides important information about kidney health.

### How the test is done:

- A small urine sample is collected (usually a spot urine sample).
- The lab measures the amount of albumin (a protein) compared to creatinine (a waste product).
- This ratio corrects for urine concentration, giving a reliable result.

### What the results mean:

- Normal: Less than 30 mg/g
- Abnormal (microalbuminuria): 30–300 mg/g (early kidney damage)
- Severely abnormal (macroalbuminuria): Over 300 mg/g (significant kidney disease)

Why it matters: Albumin in the urine means the kidneys are leaking protein, which signals kidney damage. Catching this early allows treatment changes that can slow or prevent worsening kidney disease.

### Visual Results Chart

Result	UACR Value (mg/g)
✅ Normal (Green Zone)	< 30 mg/g
⚠️ Early Kidney Damage (Yellow Zone)	30–300 mg/g
❌ Significant Kidney Disease (Red Zone)	> 300 mg/g

### Lifestyle and Diet Changes

- Reduce sodium: Aim for less than 2,300 mg/day (average American eats 3,400 mg).
- Use potassium-based salt substitutes (unless you have CKD or take medicines that raise potassium).
- Stay active with regular moderate exercise.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Take medicines as prescribed by your doctor.

### Check BP at Home

Use a validated cuff device (see [validatebp.org](https://www.validatebp.org)). Avoid relying on smartwatches or cuffless devices until they are proven accurate.

### ⚠️ Emergency Warning

If your blood pressure is ever above 180/120 mmHg, seek medical care immediately.