



ATLANTA  
HYPERTENSION  
INITIATIVE

# **Understanding Blood Pressure Barriers: Insights & Tools for Community Impact**

# THE HYPERTENSION PROBLEM: IN ATLANTA & BEYOND

- **Nearly half** of U.S. adults (120 million) have high blood pressure, a.k.a. hypertension ( $\geq 130/80$  mmHg). **Only about 1 in 4** (23%) has it under control.
- Nearly 37% of adults in the city of Atlanta and **one in three adults across the metro region** report being told they have high blood pressure.
- Uncontrolled high blood pressure is the **largest modifiable risk factor contributing to death from all causes**.

| Hypertension Status          | Population Size | Hypertension Prevalence | Ratio of Mortality Risk (Compared to Segment with No Hypertension) |            |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
|                              |                 |                         | All-Cause                                                          | CVD        |
| No Hypertension              | ~141 million    | 52%                     | n/a                                                                | n/a        |
| Undiagnosed but Uncontrolled | ~52 million     | 19%                     | +40% risk                                                          | +80% risk  |
| Diagnosed and Uncontrolled   | ~49 million     | 18%                     | +60% risk                                                          | +120% risk |
| Controlled                   | ~26 million     | 10%                     | +20% risk                                                          | +10% risk  |

# THE ATLANTA HYPERTENSION INITIATIVE (AHI)



- A **collaborative group** (government, health care, community organizations, and professional associations)
- To **harness the power of collaboration**
- For **one shared vision:**  
**Healthier Atlantans through equitable hypertension control**

## Backbone Organizations

- CDC Foundation
- Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement (ARCHI)
- American Medical Association (AMA)
- Atlanta-area American Heart Association (AHA)
- *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)\**



**90+**  
**Metro Atlanta**  
**Organizations**  
***To-Date***

*\*Founding Organization*

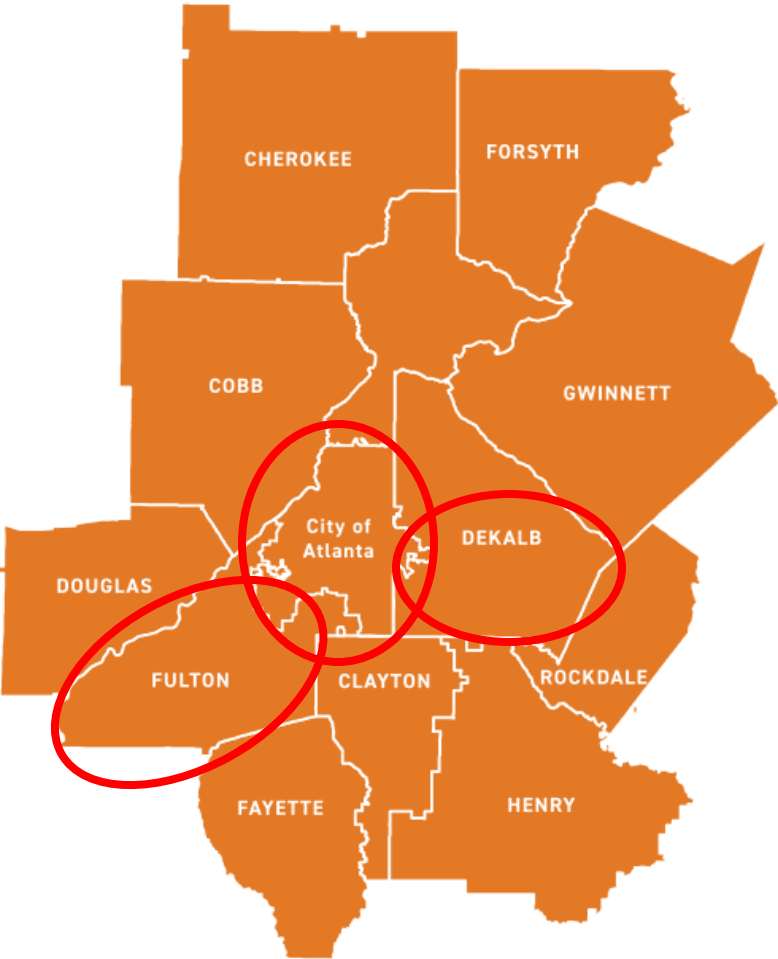
# AHI NORTH STAR: A COMMON AGENDA

Shared vision for change with a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.

**Through the collective action of organizations in health care and community settings, the AHI will reduce heart attacks and strokes in metro Atlanta by improving hypertension control among more than half a million adults in our region in 5 years.**

# AHI STRATEGY: MUTUALLY REINFORCING ACTIVITIES

Differentiating but coordinating participant activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.



| Community Capacity-Building                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Community Outreach & Campaigns                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Clinical Quality Improvement (QI) Support                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Organization-Focused</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <i>Population-Focused</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <i>Clinician-Focused</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Host Capacity-Building <b>Convening &amp; Training Events</b></li><li>• Secure &amp; Track <b>Individual &amp; Organizational Commitments</b></li><li>• Manage HTN Control-Focused <b>Communications &amp; Community</b></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement HTN Control <b>Local Media Campaign</b></li><li>• Develop Local HTN Control <b>Patient Education Website</b></li><li>• Implement HTN Control <b>Community Outreach &amp; Patient Education Trainings</b></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement <b>Clinical QI Events &amp; Trainings</b></li><li>• Secure &amp; Track <b>Health Care Organization Commitments</b></li><li>• Develop <b>Clinical QI Resource Guide</b></li></ul> |

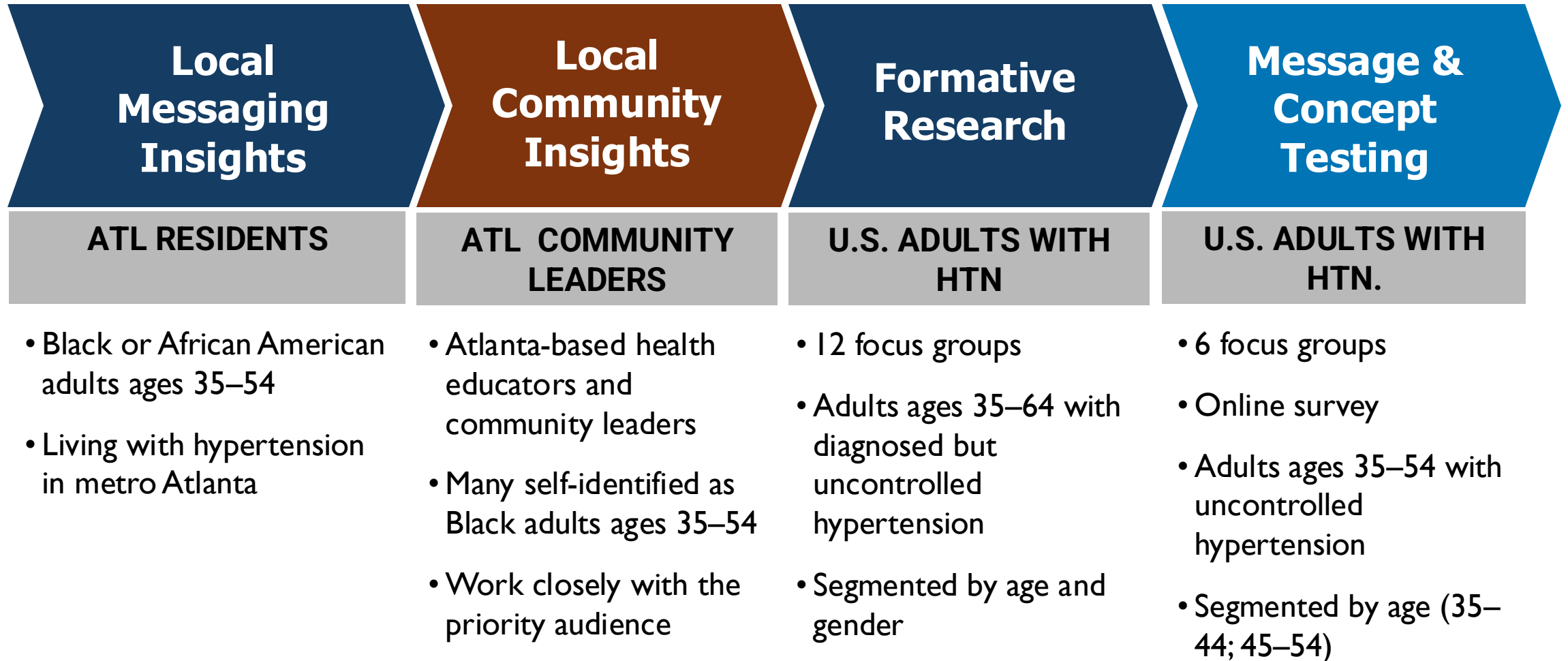
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# RESEARCH INSIGHTS

## U.S. Adults Ages 35-54 with Diagnosed, Uncontrolled Hypertension



# RESEARCH PHASES



# RESEARCH INSIGHTS

## *High-level Knowledge. Important Gaps.*

### What People Know

- Sodium, stress, weight, and genetics matter.
- Stroke and heart attack are major risks.
- Normal BP is “around 120/80.”

### Where Gaps Remain

- Limited awareness of dementia, memory loss, kidney failure, sexual health, and vision impacts.
- Many believe they can *feel* when BP is high.
- “Lowering numbers” discussed more than achieving and maintaining normal range.
- Some confusion between hypertension and other chronic conditions.

**Implication:** Move beyond basics. Clarify what control really means.



# RESEARCH INSIGHTS

## *Expanded Severity. Limited Urgency.*

### Severity Perceptions

- Hypertension described as “serious,” “dangerous,” “silent killer.”
- Consequence-heavy messaging broadened perceived risks.
- Participants shifted from heart-only view to whole-body damage.

### But Urgency Remained Low

- Few explicitly said they should act quickly.
- Younger participants often felt complications were “far off.”
- Damage understood as long-term — not immediate.

**Implication:** Increase felt urgency without creating fear paralysis.

# RESEARCH INSIGHTS

## *Emotional Experience of Hypertension*

### Uncontrolled Feels Like

- Frustration.
- Stress.
- Anger.
- Feeling “underwater.”
- Blood pressure feels unpredictable.

### Control Feels Like

- Relief.
- Peace of mind.
- Pride.
- Empowerment.
- Being there for family.

**Implication:** Pair seriousness with hope and relief.

# RESEARCH INSIGHTS

## *Misunderstanding Control*

### How Participants Define Control

- “Doing the work.”
- Making lifestyle changes.
- Taking medication.
- Working with a doctor.

### What’s Missing

- Fewer defined control as getting and keeping numbers in the normal range.
- Some believed:
  - Once controlled, medication could stop.
  - No symptoms = under control.

**Implication:** Reframe control as a number goal (less than 130/80).

# RESEARCH INSIGHTS

## *Emotional Resistance to Medication*

### Common Sentiments

- Frustration about side effects.
- Trial-and-error feels discouraging.
- Long-term use feels like “lack of control.”
- Interest in natural or holistic alternatives.

### What Improved Reactions

Medication framed as:

- Common.
- Protective.
- Part of a team effort.
- A “missing piece,” not a failure.

**Implication:** Normalize medication and pair it with agency.

# RESEARCH INSIGHTS

## *Cultural & Structural Barriers (Atlanta-Specific)*

### Structural Barriers

- Food deserts.
- Transportation limitations.
- Cost of medication.
- Insurance gaps.
- Housing instability.

### Cultural & Normative Barriers

- Fast food as normal.
- Unhealthy foods tied to celebration.
- Perception that hypertension is “in our DNA.”
- Some mistrust of health care and pharma.

**Implication:** Provide practical, culturally grounded solutions.

# RESEARCH-GROUNDED SOLUTIONS

## *Two Platforms For Community Impact*



### **Focus:** Small Steps for Heart Health

- Express Empathy
- Emphasize Small Steps
- Showcase Diverse Representation
- Reinforce Living

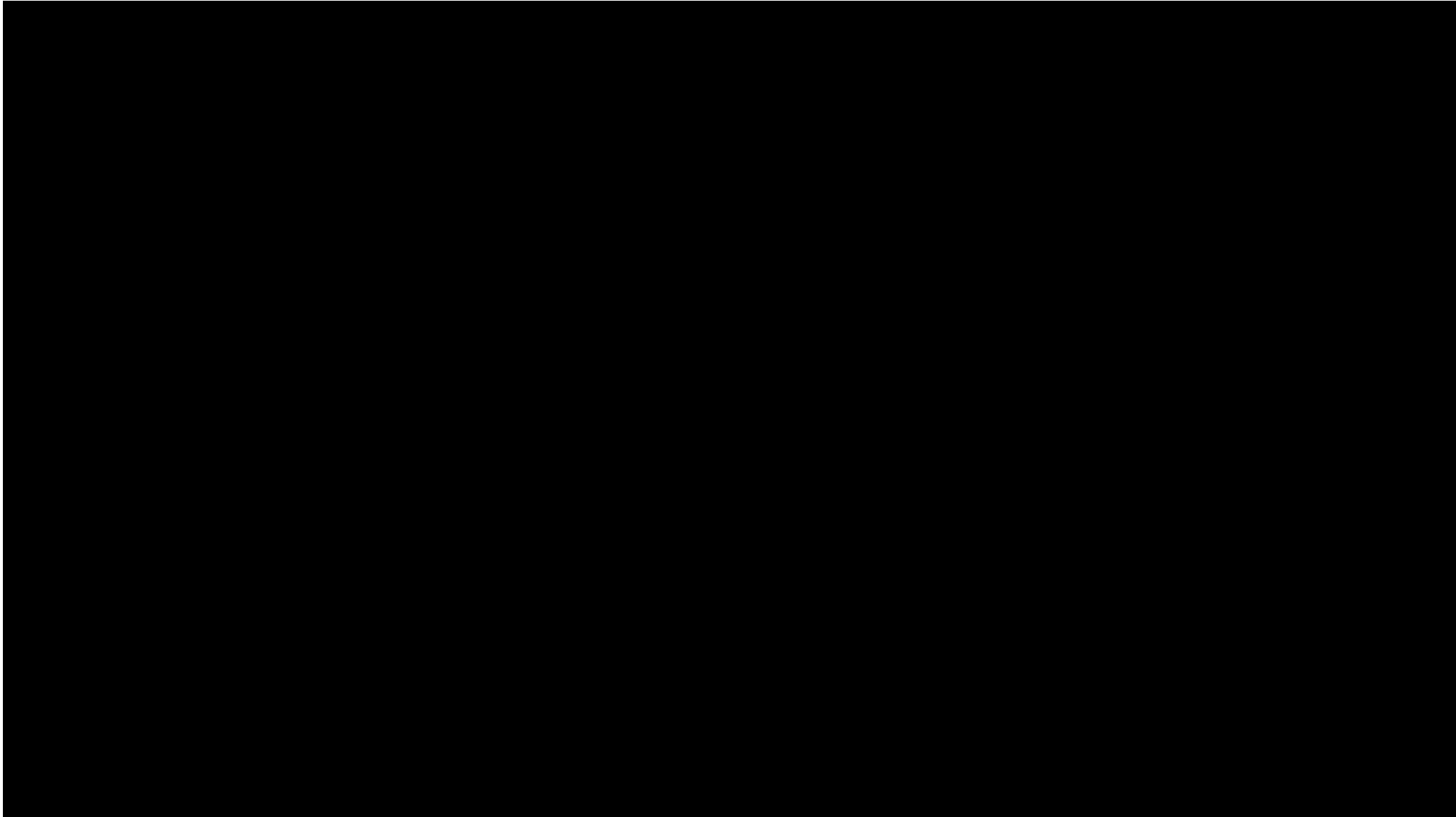


### **Focus:** High BP / Hypertension Control

- Explain the Risks
- Define Control
- Give Hope
- Share a Plan
- Address Barriers

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***LIVE TO THE BEAT***



# ***HYPERTENSION BITES***

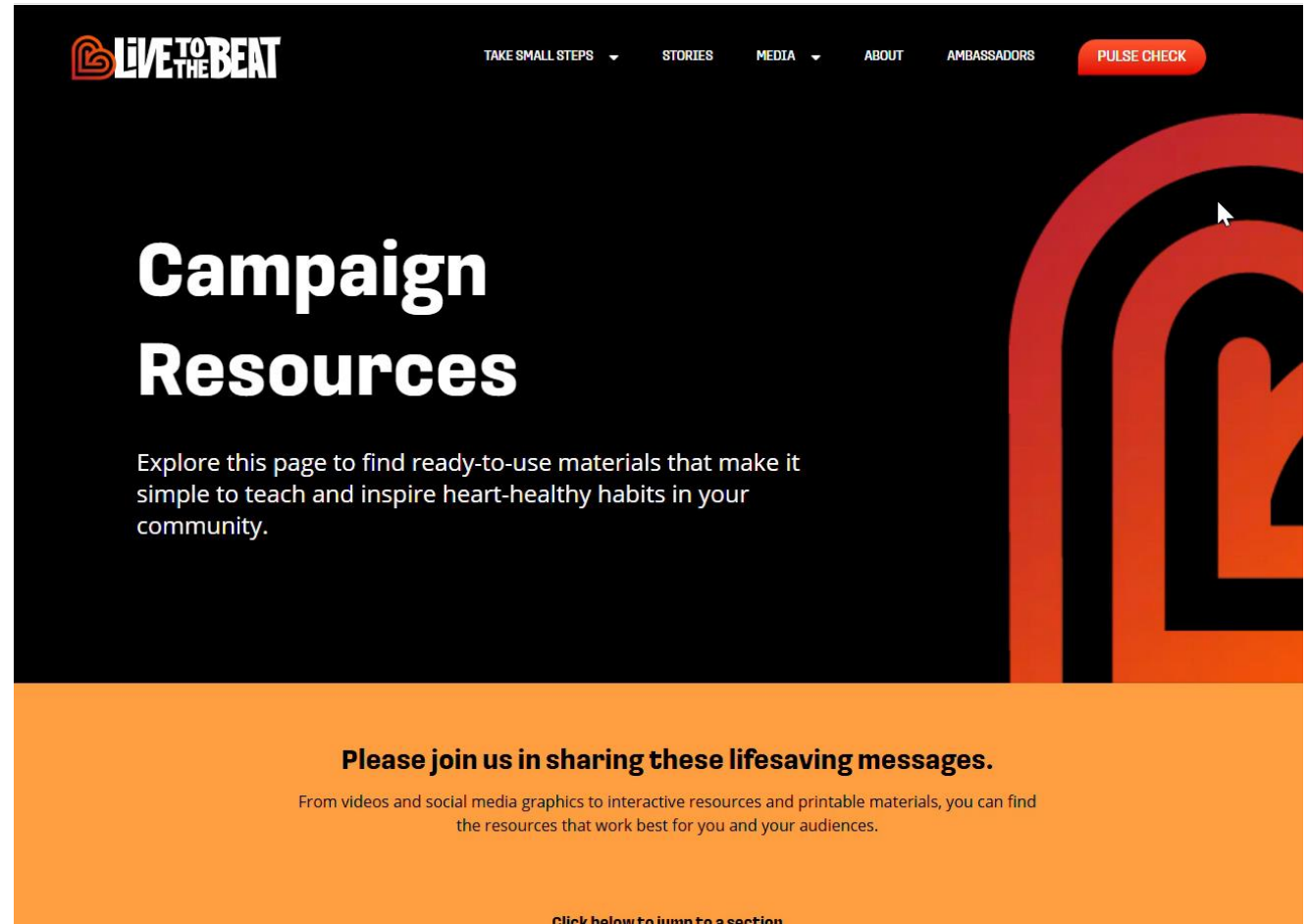




# LIVE TO THE BEAT RESOURCES

## LiveToTheBeat.org/Resources

- Video PSAs
- Educational Videos – LTTB with KevOnStage
- Animated Educational Videos
- Stories from the Heart
- Print Materials (Postcards, Posters & Tent Cards)
- Social Media Graphics



# LIVE TO THE BEAT RESOURCES

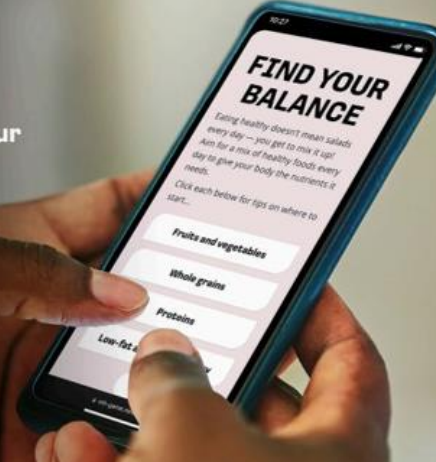
## “Pulse Check”



**Your heart health,  
your way.**

Take the first step to improving your heart health with **Pulse Check**.

The path to heart health is different for everyone. Pulse Check is an interactive roadmap that let's you customize your own small steps for heart-healthy living. Explore helpful tips, content, and quizzes to boost your knowledge. You can even earn points and badges along the way.



Try it today:  
[LivetotheBeat.org/PulseCheck](https://LivetotheBeat.org/PulseCheck)



The image shows a hand holding a smartphone. The screen displays the "FIND YOUR BALANCE" section of the Pulse Check app. It includes a motivational quote: "Eating healthy doesn't mean salads every day — you get to mix it up! Aim for a mix of healthy foods every day to give your body the nutrients it needs." Below this, it says "Click each below for tips on where to start..." and lists categories: "Fruits and vegetables", "Whole grains", "Proteins", and "Low-fat dairy".



**MyFitnessPal**

It's not just about calories.  
It's about feeling better.



FITNESS

# LIVE TO THE BEAT HTN CONTROL RESOURCES FOR ATL

Control your BP now.  
Thank yourself later.



LiveToTheBeat.org/ATL

Make a plan with a doctor to stop stroke, heart attack, and dementia — before they happen.

**LIVE TO THE BEAT**  
ATLANTA

Live to the Beat - Atlanta  
Sponsored

Uncontrolled high blood pressure takes a toll on more than your heart — it can affect your sex life, your vision, and even your memory! 🚫💡 And it's more common than you might think. Protect what matters most to you by asking a health care professional about high blood pressure at every visit. #LiveToTheBeat #Atlanta



Uncontrolled high blood pressure doesn't just hurt you. It hurts us.

**LIVE TO THE BEAT**  
ATLANTA

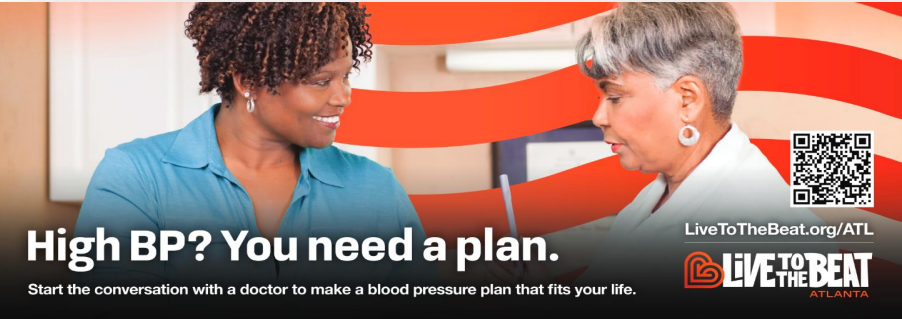
Live to the Beat - Atlanta  
Sponsored

Getting to a healthy blood pressure takes a team: you (the MVP!) and health care professionals, like a doctor, a nurse, and a pharmacist. 🤝 Their job is to help you reach your blood pressure goal. It might take a few tries to get there, but when you make a plan to control your blood pressure together, it's possible. And it's the best way to lower your risk of many life-changing health problems, like stroke and memory loss or dementia. Book an appointment to talk about blood pressure today. #LiveToTheBeat #Atlanta



Blood pressure control is a team effort — reach your goal together.

**LIVE TO THE BEAT**  
ATLANTA

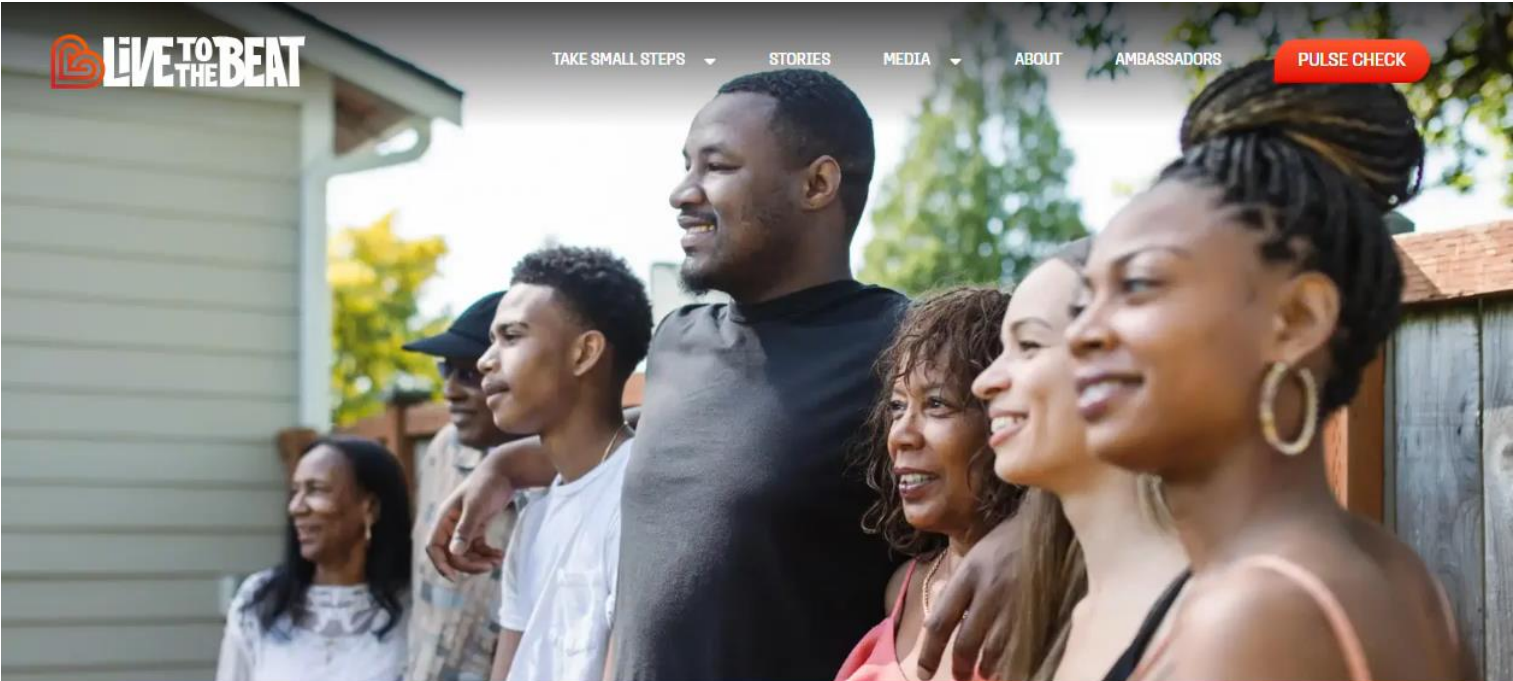


**High BP? You need a plan.**

Start the conversation with a doctor to make a blood pressure plan that fits your life.

LiveToTheBeat.org/ATL

**LIVE TO THE BEAT**  
ATLANTA



**LIVE TO THE BEAT**  
ATLANTA

TAKE SMALL STEPS ▾ STORIES MEDIA ▾ ABOUT AMBASSADORS [PULSE CHECK](#)

## Atlanta: Let's Take the Pressure Off

Uncontrolled high blood pressure can cause serious health problems, like stroke, dementia, kidney failure, heart attack, and even sexual health issues. Problems like these can change your life — and make it harder to do the things you love to do. The good news is that you can take steps to lower your blood pressure and lower your risk.

If your blood pressure is often higher than 120 over 80, it's time to take action. This site offers tips and local resources to help you bring your



# LIVE TO THE BEAT ATL: HTN CONTROL-FOCUSED CAMPAIGN

**Live to the Beat - Atlanta**  
Sponsored · 📍

Uncontrolled high blood pressure takes a toll on more than your heart — it can affect your sex life, your vision, and even your memory! 🧠💔 And it's more common than you might think. Protect what matters most to you by asking a health care professional about high #BloodPressure at every visit. #LiveToTheBeat #Atlanta



**Uncontrolled high blood pressure doesn't just hurt you. It hurts us.**

**LIVE TO THE BEAT**

**Live to the Beat - Atlanta**  
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Getting to a healthy #BloodPressure takes a team: you (the MVP!) and health care professionals, like a doctor, a nurse, and a pharmacist. ❤️ Their job is to help you reach your blood pressure goal. It might take a few tries to get there, but when you make a plan to control your blood pressure together, it's possible. And it's the best way to lower your risk of many life-changing health problems, like stroke and memory loss or dementia. Book an appointment to talk about blood pressure today. #LiveToTheBeat #Atlanta



**Blood pressure control is a team effort — reach your goal together.**

**LIVE TO THE BEAT**

**Control your BP now.  
Thank yourself later.**

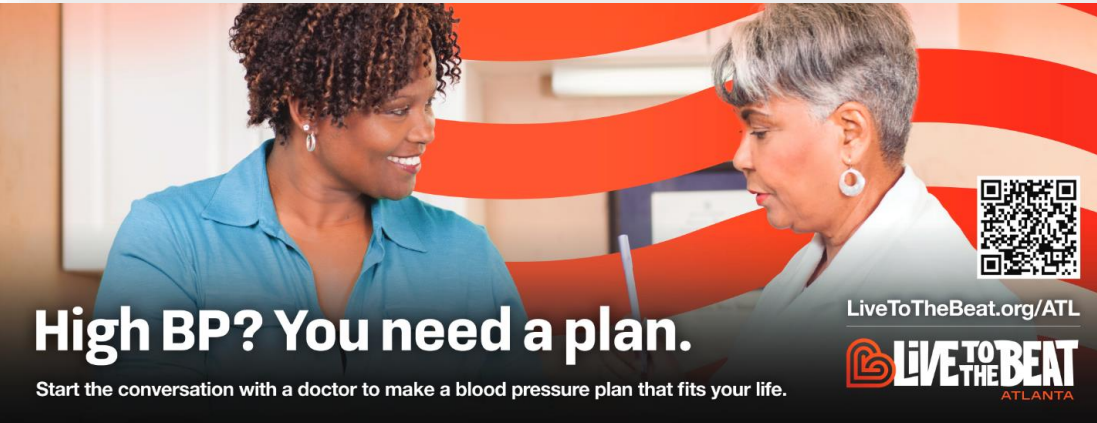




LiveToTheBeat.org/ATL

**Make a plan with a doctor to stop stroke, heart attack, and dementia — before they happen.**

**LIVE TO THE BEAT**  
ATLANTA



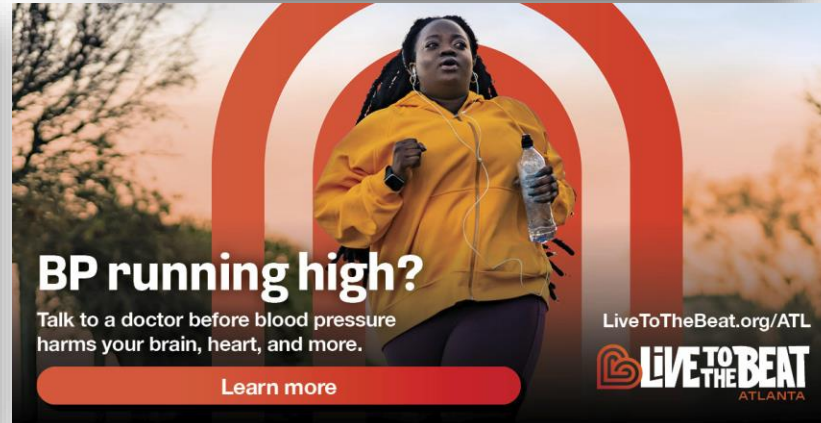
**High BP? You need a plan.**

Start the conversation with a doctor to make a blood pressure plan that fits your life.

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**LIVE TO THE BEAT**  
ATLANTA





**BP running high?**

Talk to a doctor before blood pressure harms your brain, heart, and more.

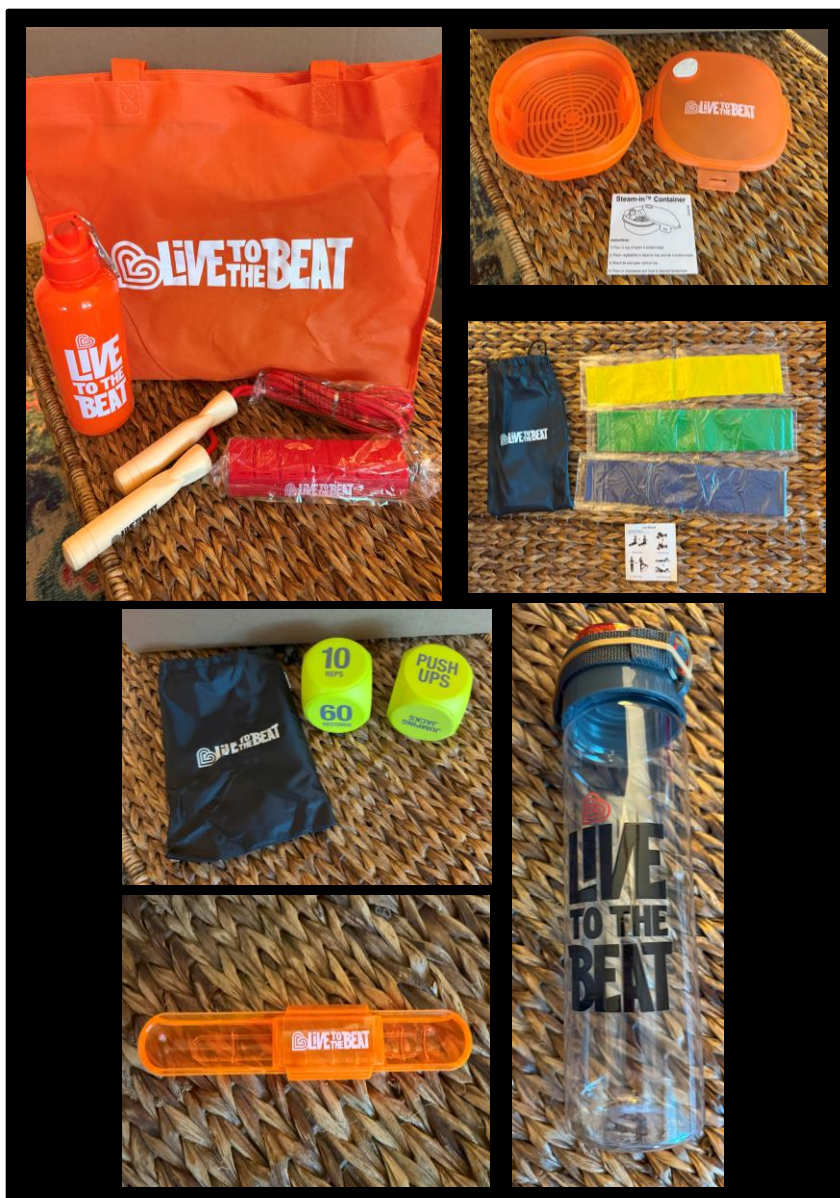
[Learn more](#)

LiveToTheBeat.org/ATL

**LIVE TO THE BEAT**  
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# LIVE TO THE BEAT COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS





TAKE SMALL STEPS ▾STORIESMEDIA ▾ABOUTAMBASSADORS

PULSE CHECK

COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

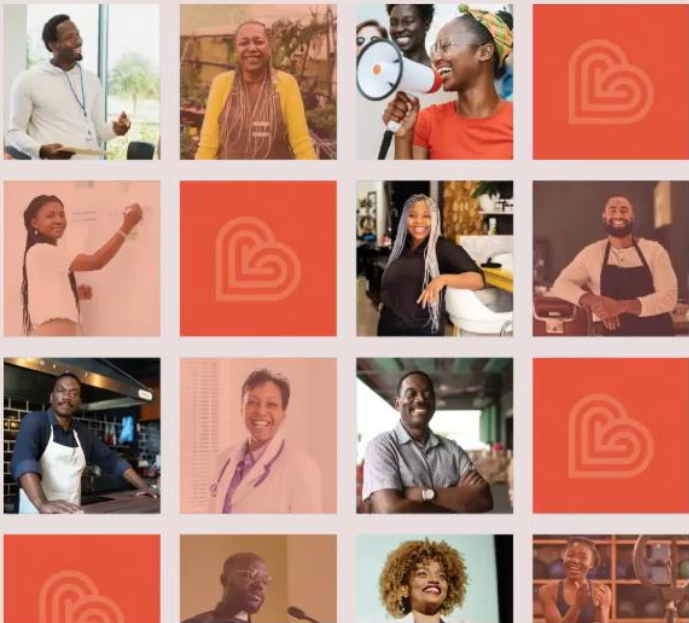
Learn about the community ambassadors who help empower adults to live their healthiest lives.

## Join our Community Ambassador Network

We invite you to join and spread the word about an exclusive network of trusted leaders, organizations, and businesses in the Black community to help us empower more adults to live their healthiest lives. As a “Live to the Beat” Community Ambassador, you can help those in your community lower their risk for heart disease and stroke. As an Ambassador, you would:

- Sharing heart-healthy messages and resources with your community.
- Promoting opportunities for your audiences to win cool prizes for taking healthy steps.
- Sharing your outreach to inspire others.
- Gaining national recognition and a chance to earn prizes of your own.

Check out the “Live to the Beat” catalog of resources to see the materials you will have access to. Visit [bit.ly/communityambassadorsnetwork](https://bit.ly/communityambassadorsnetwork) to express interest and get started.

A grid of 12 images showing diverse community members and the Live to the Beat logo. The images are arranged in a 3x4 grid. The first row shows a man in a white shirt, a woman in a yellow shirt, a woman with a megaphone, and the Live to the Beat logo. The second row shows a woman in a white shirt, the Live to the Beat logo, a woman in a black shirt, and a man in a black shirt. The third row shows a man in a blue shirt, a woman in a pink shirt, a man in a grey shirt, and the Live to the Beat logo.

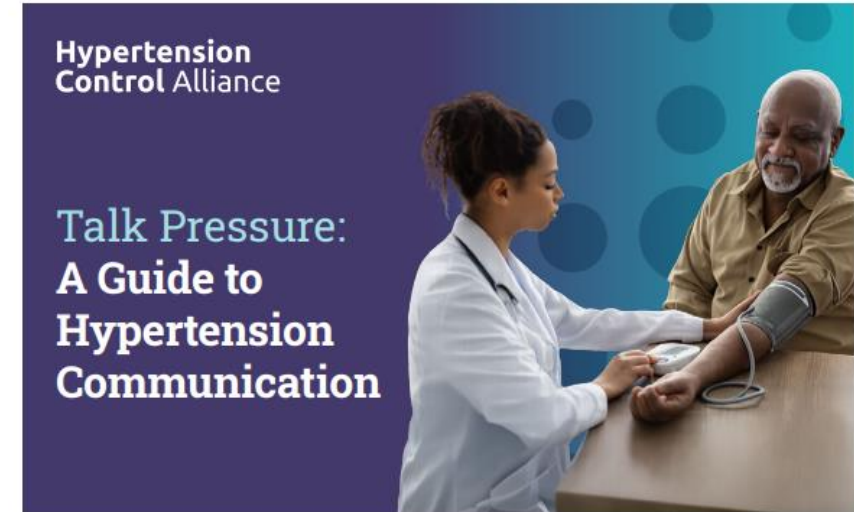
# HYPERTENSION BITES RESOURCES

## "Talk Pressure" Guide

- Practical messages to help your community understand, feel confident, and take small steps towards control

## How to Use It

- One-on-one conversations
- Group education
- Clinical or community settings



High blood pressure (hypertension) affects nearly half (48.1%) of all adults in the U.S. Furthermore, most adults with hypertension don't have it under control — 3 in 4 adults with hypertension have a blood pressure of 130/80 mm Hg or higher.<sup>1</sup> This is a serious problem. High blood pressure is often called the "silent killer" because it rarely causes symptoms and can quietly damage the heart, brain, kidneys, and blood vessels when left uncontrolled.<sup>2</sup> Over time, that damage raises the risk of life-altering conditions such as heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, and even dementia.<sup>3</sup>

The good news: Blood pressure control is possible. Hypertension is the most modifiable risk factor for preventing these life-altering conditions.<sup>4</sup> **Clear, effective communication plays a critical role in supporting more adults in achieving control and following their care plans.**<sup>5</sup> That's why CDC Foundation's Hypertension Control Alliance created this guide to support health care and public health professionals with research-informed messages that can help people take steps toward blood pressure control.

### The Talk Pressure Communication Framework

Effective blood pressure conversations follow a clear progression — helping patients understand the urgency, the goal, and the path forward. The **"Talk Pressure" communication framework** is informed by message testing research with more than 400 U.S. adults with hypertension. It is designed to make blood pressure control understandable and achievable by organizing key messages into five essential components:

<sup>1</sup> <https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/data-reports/hypertension-prevalence.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/high-blood-pressure/about/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/high-blood-pressure/about/index.html#text=Signs%20and%20symptoms\\_High%20blood%20pressure%20usually%20has%20no%20warning%20signs%20or%20symptoms.you%20have%20high%20blood%20pressure](https://www.cdc.gov/high-blood-pressure/about/index.html#text=Signs%20and%20symptoms_High%20blood%20pressure%20usually%20has%20no%20warning%20signs%20or%20symptoms.you%20have%20high%20blood%20pressure)

<sup>4</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jacc.2025.05.007>

<sup>5</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jacc.2025.05.007>





# ***HYPERTENSION BITES* RESOURCES**

## **Video PSAs**





# ***HYPERTENSION BITES RESOURCES***

## **Social Graphics & Digital Banners**





# HYPERTENSION BITES RESOURCES

## Print Materials (Posters & Tent Cards)



# ***HYPERTENSION BITES RESOURCES***

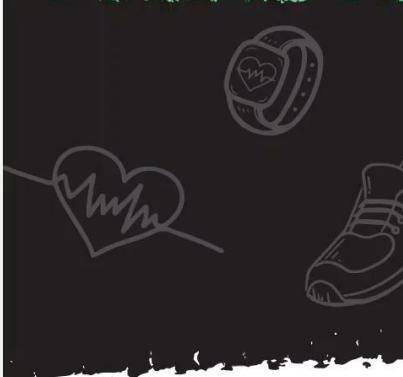
## ***USA Today Article & Influencer Content***



# BP Control Tracker

# My Blood Pressure Control Plan

Control is possible. Taking the steps in your control plan will help you get there.



**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# My Blood Pressure Journal

Use this journal to record your blood pressure numbers each day. Bring it to your next appointment to discuss with your health care professional.

## Measuring My Blood Pressure Numbers

Time and discussing your blood pressure numbers with your health care professional is the only way to know if your blood pressure is under control.

**My goal is to get my blood pressure numbers under:**  
**130 (systolic) / 80 (diastolic)**

## My Blood Pressure Control Plan

Control is possible. Taking the steps in your control plan will help you get there.

☐ **Elevated** — less than 130 (systolic) / less than 80 (diastolic)

☐ **Stage 2 high blood pressure** — 140 or higher (systolic) / 90 or higher (diastolic)

**is:**

☐ Share numbers at my next health care visit

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Health Care Professional: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hypertension Bites** | Brought to you by the Hypertension Control Alliance



# HYPERTENSION BITES RESOURCES

[MyBPControl.org](https://mybpcontrol.org)

BP Control Plan Starter & BP Control Explorer

**Hypertension Bites**

[Blood Pressure Control](#) [What is a Control Plan?](#) [Get Started on Your Control Plan](#) [Resources](#) [About This Campaign](#)

## Hypertension means high blood pressure.

If you have it, you're not alone. About half of adults in the U.S. have high blood pressure, and many are working to get it under control.

### Hypertension Causes Serious Harm

Uncontrolled high blood pressure can harm many different parts of your body, including your heart, your brain, your kidneys, your eyes, and more. The good news is you can prevent

### Control Changes Everything

By keeping your blood pressure below 130 over 80, you can reduce your risk of serious health problems, like heart attack, stroke, kidney damage, and even dementia.

### Make Your Control Plan

Controlling your blood pressure now can help you stay healthy for years to come. To get there, you'll need a control plan that fits your life.



# HYPERTENSION BITES RESOURCES

## MyBPControl.org/Resources Resources Toolkit

- Key messages
- Social + digital copy
- Videos + graphics
- Easy, turnkey assets

### Hypertension Bites

## HYPERTENSION BITES TOOLKIT

Use this toolkit to help your audiences understand what blood pressure control means, why it matters, and how to work with a health care professional to take steps that fit their everyday life.

Plug these ready-made messages and creative assets into your existing outreach, helping more people lower their risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney damage, and even dementia. Choose the resources that work best for you and your audiences.

### TALKING TO PATIENTS



Use the "Talk Pressure" Guide to have empowering conversations with those you serve. The Guide equips you with practical messages to help your community understand, feel confident, and take small steps towards hypertension control. Stronger communication helps you build trust, and people are more likely to follow through on treatment plans.

### KEY MESSAGES

Use these key messages across your communications—on social media, websites, emails, or in person—to explain what blood pressure control means and motivate your audiences to take small steps toward control.

#### Blood Pressure Control Basics

- When your blood pressure numbers are often higher than 130 over 80, it's called high blood pressure, also known as hypertension.
- Control means keeping your blood pressure consistently below 130 over 80.
- Uncontrolled high blood pressure can lead to heart attack, stroke, kidney damage, and even dementia.
- Every moment your blood pressure is out of control, it's doing serious harm to your body that you can't always see.

#### Getting a Blood Pressure Control Plan

- Blood pressure control is possible. Partner with a health care professional (like a doctor, nurse, or pharmacist) to create a personalized control plan.
- For most people, a complete blood pressure control plan includes:
  - **Measurement:** tracking your numbers

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# OPPORTUNITIES

- **Become or Recruit a Community Ambassador:**  
[LiveToTheBeat.org/Ambassadors](https://LiveToTheBeat.org/Ambassadors)
- **Share a HTN Control Story – Patients and Professionals:**  
[TinyURL.com/BPControlStories](https://TinyURL.com/BPControlStories)
- **Become or Recruit a Community Ambassador:**  
[LiveToTheBeat.org/Ambassadors](https://LiveToTheBeat.org/Ambassadors)
- **Contribute Resources:**  
[LiveToTheBeat.org/ATL](https://LiveToTheBeat.org/ATL)
- **Discuss Other Opportunities:**  
[hypertension@cdcfoundation.org](mailto:hypertension@cdcfoundation.org)