



American Heart Association®

Hard Hats with Heart™



## Toolbox Talks

# Partner with Your Doctor to Manage Your High Blood Pressure

## Working together to fine-tune your blood pressure treatment

According to AHA recommendations, people being treated but still not reaching their target blood pressure should be a healthcare priority. A key to better control is a good doctor-patient partnership.

### Collaboration is key

If you're one of the millions of Americans battling high blood pressure (HBP or hypertension), here are some solutions to help you collaborate with your healthcare provider and get your blood pressure under control:

- **Ask about your blood pressure at your annual checkup.** If it's high, check your blood pressure regularly between appointments – at home or at a pharmacy with a blood pressure monitor.
- **Follow up with your doctor** based on his/her recommendations.
- **Know your numbers.** Learn what your blood pressure numbers mean to you and your health.
- **Become a tracker.** Keep a log of your medication, blood pressure levels and questions to ask your doctor as they come to mind.
- **Be flexible.** It may take a while to get to your blood pressure goal. It may also take more than one medication in addition to lifestyle changes to get you there. Keep in close touch with your healthcare provider along the way to create the best plan for yourself.
- **Know yourself.** What keeps you from keeping up with your medicines? From eating healthy? From losing weight? Be aware of your barriers to better health and talk with your doctor about them. Your provider or clinic may have suggestions or know programs that can help.

Once your treatment program becomes routine, maintaining a lower blood pressure is easier. Remind yourself that by managing your blood pressure, you are lowering your risk for heart attack, stroke and other serious conditions.

### Frequently Asked Questions:

#### How do I know my numbers?

Consistent monitoring is key! Trackers help you notice what your personal "normal" is.

### Discussion Questions:

- How did you find your primary care physician?
- What is the biggest barrier to going for an annual check-up?