

## The Teamsters Local 922- Employers Health Trust

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# Helpful Hints & Reminders

## Cardiovascular Health

February is American Heart Month.

Blood pressure is the pressure of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. Arteries carry blood from your heart to other parts of your body.

Your blood pressure normally rises and falls throughout the day.<sup>1</sup>

Uncontrolled high blood pressure (hypertension) puts people at risk for heart disease, stroke, heart failure, kidney failure, vision loss, peripheral artery disease, pregnancy complications, and much more.

## Prevent High Blood Pressure

By living a healthy lifestyle, you can help keep your blood pressure in a healthy range.

- ♥ Eat a healthy diet choosing a variety of foods rich in potassium, fiber, and protein and lower is salt and saturated fat. Be sure to

include plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.

- ♥ Maintain a healthy weight.
- ♥ Physical activity can help keep you at a healthy weight and lower your blood pressure.
- ♥ Smoking raises your blood pressure and increases your risk for heart attack and stroke.
- ♥ Limit alcohol.
- ♥ Get enough sleep.



## Manage High Blood Pressure

Managing your high blood pressure can lower your risk for health problems such as heart disease and stroke. Measuring your blood pressure is an important step toward keeping a healthy blood pressure. Because high blood pressure and elevated blood pressure often

have no symptoms, checking your blood pressure is the only way to know for sure whether it is too high. Managing diabetes, taking your prescribed medications, and making lifestyle changes can help lower your blood pressure.

## What to Watch Out For

### Heart Disease<sup>2</sup>:

- ♥ Heart attack: Chest pain or discomfort, upper back or neck pain, indigestion, heartburn, nausea or vomiting, extreme fatigue, upper body discomfort, dizziness, and shortness of breath.
- ♥ Arrhythmia: Fluttering feelings in the chest (palpitations).
- ♥ Heart failure: Shortness of breath, fatigue, or swelling of the feet, ankles, legs, abdomen, or neck veins.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/about.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/about.htm>

**Stroke<sup>3</sup>:**

- ♥ Numbness or weakness in the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- ♥ Confusion, trouble speaking, or difficulty understanding speech.
- ♥ Trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- ♥ Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance, or lack of coordination.
- ♥ Severe headache with no known cause.

F—Face: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

A—Arms: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S—Speech: Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is the speech slurred or strange?

T—Time: If you see any of these signs, call 9-1-1 right away.

Acting F.A.S.T. can help stroke patients get the treatments they desperately need. The stroke treatments that work best are available only if the stroke is recognized and diagnosed within 3 hours of the first symptoms. Stroke patients may not be eligible for these if they don't arrive at the hospital in time.

If you think someone may be having a stroke, act F.A.S.T. and do the following simple test:

***For Information on How to Obtain Benefits, Contact:***

**BENESYS, INC.  
(410) 872-9500**

**Physical Address:  
7130 Columbia Gateway  
Drive, Suite A  
Columbia, MD 21046**

**Mailing address:  
P.O Box 99758, Troy, MI 48099**

**Resources**

Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention:  
[www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/)