JUNE 2003

New Blood Pressure Guidelines

New guidelines issued by medical groups and government health agencies in May 2003 have lowered the “normal” range for blood pressure to less than 120 (systolic) and less than 80 (diastolic). See the accompanying chart for all risk ranges.

Blood pressure is a measure of the force created on the walls of your blood vessels as the heart pumps blood throughout the body. It is highest right after the heart contracts—this is called systolic BP (upper number). It is lowest between contractions—this is the diastolic BP (lowest number). If the pressure on the walls of the arteries is too high, the result is high blood pressure (also called hypertension).

Hypertension’s causes are complex but obesity, heredity, smoking and sedentary lifestyle increases its risk. Blood pressure also tends to increase with age. Hypertension greatly increases the risk of heart disease, stroke and kidney failure. More than 50 million Americans have hypertension and 30 percent who have it do not know.

Blood pressure can be lowered through weight loss, exercising more, quitting smoking, reducing salt intake and eating more fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products. Persons with hypertension should seek a physicians advice and may need BP-reducing medications under supervision.

For further information on the new guidelines for patients, consult: http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category*</th>
<th>Systolic</th>
<th>Diastolic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>less than 120</td>
<td>and less than 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline (Prehypertension)</td>
<td>120 - 139</td>
<td>or 80 - 89</td>
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<tr>
<td>High (Hypertension)</td>
<td>140 or higher</td>
<td>or 90 or higher</td>
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*Source: National Institutes of Health National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute May 2003

What is a SMAC test?

The SMAC, or Chem Panel, is an important health screening tool. The SMAC test provided by Healthwaves gives the status of 30 blood chemistry values, including cholesterol, liver and kidney function, blood glucose, various minerals like iron, and more. A fasting blood sample is obtained through a simple venipuncture draw from the arm. Your personal lab report is mailed to your home address within five to seven days.

The SMAC test is great for anyone who is interested in taking a more active role in monitoring their own health. Because heart disease risk factors like cholesterol, HDL and blood sugar are included, even young adults can benefit from getting this standard blood test. Reference (i.e., normal) ranges for your age and sex are included with the laboratory report. The SMAC provides a baseline for future testing. Healthwaves provides additional information with your lab report. However, it is especially important that you follow up with your own physician if any of the blood chemistry values fall outside the normal range.

A SMAC test provides only one piece of your health status and must be considered in context. Other health risk factors include your personal and family health history, nutrition/diet, physical activity, and habits like smoking and drinking. It’s up to you to take charge of your health!

For information on worksite screenings, call 480-968-1886
Each year it is estimated that 200,000 people, mostly young adults, get Hepatitis B. More than 11,000 are hospitalized and 4,000 to 5,000 people die from chronic Hepatitis B.

Hepatitis B is a virus that is spread through contact with the blood and/or body fluids of an infected person. Transmission of the virus can take place by having sex with a contaminated person and sharing needles or personal items, such as a razor.

Approximately one-third of the documented Hepatitis B cases have unknown sources. The Hepatitis B virus can cause short-term (acute) illness that leads to:
- loss of appetite
- tiredness
- diarrhea
- jaundice (yellow skin or eyes)
- pain in muscles, joints and stomach

Occupational workers at greatest risk for Hepatitis B are: health, hospitality, sanitation, food service, and education.

Fortunately, there is a vaccine to prevent this illness! It is a three dose (injection) series. All three doses are needed for full and lasting immunity. It is not a live vaccine and has few to no side effects, although, as with any medication, it is capable of causing allergic reactions. The most common side effects of the vaccine are soreness at the injection site lasting a day or two, and/or a mild to moderate fever.

Hepatitis B is 100,000 times more infectious than AIDS! BE AWARE!

The Hepatitis B vaccine is available year-round at Healthwaves. Call for more information on this and several other vaccines, 480-968-1886.