

Quick Guide: Physical Health Indicators

HEALTH MEASUREMENTS	TERM	"AT RISK" RANGES
blood pressure (systolic/diastolic)	mmHg	≥ 130 (S) / ≥ 85 (D)
waist circumference	cm	> 102 (M) / > 88 (W)
body mass index	BMI	≥ 25
breath CO (carbon monoxide)	ppm	≥ 10
HDL cholesterol	mg/dL	< 40
LDL cholesterol	mg/dL	≥ 130
triglycerides	mg/dL	≥ 150

Physical Health Indicator Explanations

blood pressure: systolic blood pressure is measured after the heart contracts and is the top number; diastolic blood pressure is measured when the heart is at rest and is the bottom number

waist circumference: waist circumference measurement helps determine abdominal fat which is associated with an increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, some cancers and even early death

body mass index (BMI): BMI is a number calculated using a person's weight and height and can be an indicator of body fatness; BMI does not measure fat directly, but is a screening tool to identify possible weight problems and to determine if they pose a health risk ($BMI = kg/m^2$)

breath CO (carbon monoxide): carbon monoxide is a colorless, tasteless and odorless gas that is highly poisonous (cigarette smoke can contain high levels of CO); CO Poisoning symptoms include: fatigue, headaches, dizziness, weakness, nausea & vomiting

HDL cholesterol: high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol is a combination of fats (lipids) and proteins in which lipids are transported in the blood; HDL cholesterol is the "good" cholesterol that may lower the risk of coronary artery disease

LDL cholesterol: low-density lipoprotein cholesterol is referred to as the "bad" cholesterol because elevated levels of LDLs are associated with increased risk of heart disease

triglycerides: triglycerides are the main ingredient in vegetable oils and animal fats, and are also produced by low physical activity, cigarette smoking, being overweight, high carbohydrate diet and excess alcohol intake

How can I lower my risk?

In general, maintaining a healthy weight, eating nutritious food, being physically active and not consuming tobacco all contribute to decreased risk of developing disease.