



## **FACTS ABOUT HYPERTENSION**

- It is estimated that 50 million American adults have high blood pressure. Each year, two million new cases of the disease are diagnosed.
- High blood pressure is one of the leading causes of disability or death due to stroke, heart attack, heart failure, and kidney failure; high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels are responsible for as much as 75 percent of cardiovascular disease.
- Presently, approximately one million Americans die from cardiovascular disease each year, and nearly half of all Americans will ultimately die from cardiovascular disease.
- High blood pressure is often called the silent killer because most people with this condition do not experience any signs or symptoms. Today about 15 million Americans have no idea that they have high blood pressure.
- Some individuals with high blood pressure will experience headaches, dizziness, or nosebleeds. However, signs and symptoms typically do not occur until high blood pressure has advanced to a worse and possibly life-threatening stage.
- The Seventh Report of the Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Pressure found that high blood pressure risk starts at 115/75 (systolic/diastolic) and increases as the blood pressure rises. The Seventh Report cautions that individuals with a systolic blood pressure of 120-139 or a diastolic blood pressure of 80-89 should be considered pre-hypertension, a condition that requires health-promoting lifestyle modifications to prevent cardiovascular disease.
- Steps to prevent cardiovascular disease include: (1) losing weight, (2) exercising frequently and consistently, (3) lowering sodium intake, and (4) regularly practicing stress management.