



American
Heart
Association.



American Heart Association Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge Toolkit



THANK YOU

Thank you for hosting a Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge Volunteer Activity with your employees! Uncontrolled high blood pressure robs us of precious time with our loved ones. It is a silent killer, a leading risk factor for cardiovascular disease that causes unnecessary and inequitable disease and death.

By rallying your employees to participate in this challenge, your company will exponentially magnify the American Heart Association's impact and further our goal of reducing hypertension. During the challenge, volunteers will complete a series of outreach and awareness activities designed to reach thousands of people over a two-week period.

This toolkit provides step-by-step guidance to hold a successful Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge, including a detailed volunteer checklist, communication tips, social media messages and more.

WHY THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION IS FOCUSED ON BLOOD PRESSURE AWARENESS



As champions for health equity, the American Heart Association has an ongoing commitment to ensure that we are addressing the leading risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

- Nearly **half of U.S. adults** have high blood pressure and many don't even know they have it.
- People with high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease are at **increased risk for serious complications** and death from COVID-19, and these preexisting conditions are contributing to racial disparities in COVID-19 death rates.
- According to data from 2018, more than half of Hispanic males and more than 40% of Hispanic females had high blood pressure, **causing 7,137 deaths that year alone.**
- Because of ongoing societal injustices and systemic inequities, **Black Americans have among the highest rates of high blood pressure in the world.** This is an issue even for younger Black Americans. Their risk of stroke is about 1.5 times higher than other demographics.

The American Heart Association is calling on community members, organizations, businesses and others to collaborate with us as we work to enrich the lives of our neighbors – together.

If we don't help more adults control their blood pressure, we risk continual reversal of progress made fighting heart disease and stroke. Empowering community members to control their blood pressure can go a long way in the AHA's mission to create a world of longer, healthier lives!



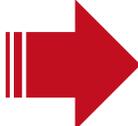
If your company is looking for an evidence-based blood pressure self-management program, contact an AHA representative to learn more about Check. Change. Control.

PLANNING YOUR COMPANY'S BLOOD PRESSURE AWARENESS CHALLENGE

STEP 1:

Set goals for the impact your company wants to make.

- How many employees does your company want to participate in the challenge?
- How many people does your company want to reach with blood pressure awareness? (i.e.. if you recruit 100 volunteers for the challenge and each of them reaches out to 10 of their personal contacts, your company will impact at least 1000 people!)
- Be thoughtful about recruiting volunteers that represent different racial/ethnicities, faiths, genders and orientations.

 **Quick Tip:** Consider purchasing a clinically validated blood pressure monitor for your office location!

STEP 2:

Select a time period for the Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge

Your company may participate in the challenge any time of year, but it is recommended that the activities be completed over a two-week period. Below are some suggestions for your company to consider.

May: High Blood Pressure and Stroke Awareness Month

February: American Heart Month

October 29: World Stroke Day



**Pay special attention to religious or cultural conflicts with the dates. For example, picking a time when certain faiths practice fasting, would not be ideal for running this program.*

STEP 3:

Recruit Volunteers

The goal is to raise awareness with the largest and most diverse audience possible, so be sure to offer this volunteer opportunity to ALL employees in the company!

Create ways to get the word out about this opportunity. Work with human resources, communications and Employee Resource Groups to discuss ways to communicate with potential participants. Ask your CEO to send a company-wide e-mail, memo or voicemail inviting individuals to get involved.

There may be existing communications that can be utilized to promote participation (company newsletter, wellness e-mails, Employee Resource Group communications, breakroom postings, building information monitors/screens, etc.).

FYI - Many of the AHA's blood pressure resources are offered in Spanish



SAMPLE INVITATION E-MAIL



SUBJECT: Volunteer Opportunity With The American Heart Association

Dear Employees,

We are excited to share that **[Insert: Company Name]** is participating in the American Heart Association's Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge and we are looking for volunteers!

Did you know that nearly half of U.S. adults have high blood pressure and many don't even know they have it? It is a silent killer, a leading risk factor for cardiovascular disease that causes unnecessary and inequitable disease and death.

Our employees can make a difference – especially in the places where it matters most. **Our goal is to raise awareness about high blood pressure, especially among those in historically under-resourced communities where people face health-related disparities related to heart disease and stroke.**

By volunteering for the Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge each of us can help save and improve lives. All it takes is a two-week commitment to complete a series of outreach and awareness activities that can reach thousands of people in our community.

CALL TO ACTION:

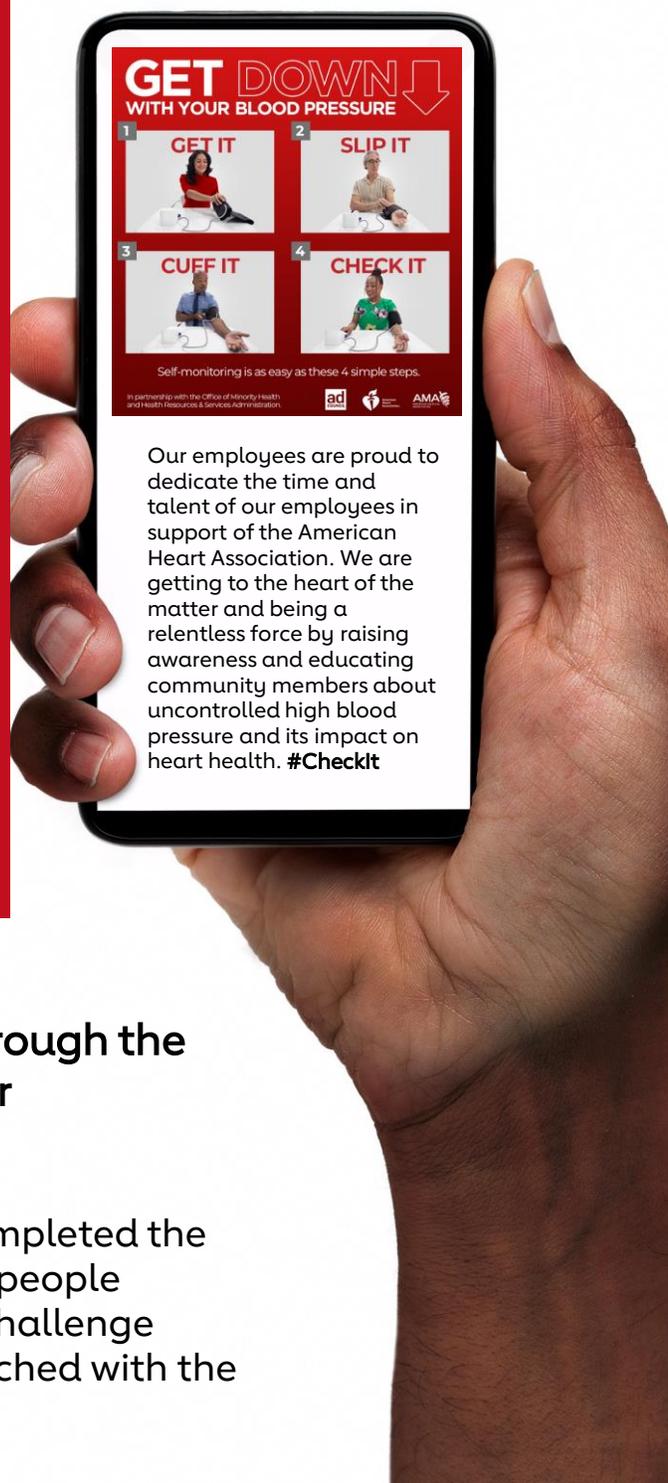
Please sign-up by **[Insert date and include information about how volunteers can sign-up]** The challenge will take place from **[Insert dates]**. Use this checklist to complete the challenge and track your progress! Educating community members about blood pressure can go a long way to support the AHA's mission of creating a world of longer, healthier lives!

Sincerely,

STEP 4:**Get Social**

Share information about your company's volunteer experience using these AHA-approved social media posts along with a photo of employees participating in the volunteer activity:

- "Our employees are proud to dedicate the time and talent of our employees in support of the American Heart Association. We are getting to the heart of the matter and being a relentless force by raising awareness and educating community members about uncontrolled high blood pressure and its impact on heart health. Visit heart.org/hbpcontrol learn more! #CheckIt
- "[Company name] is committed to showing up for our community and being a relentless force for longer, healthier lives. Our employees are proud to make an impact by volunteering with the American Heart Association to raise awareness about blood pressure and hypertension! . Visit heart.org/hbpcontrol learn more! #CheckIt"

**STEP 5:**

Submit the number of people impacted through the challenge to your AHA staff contact and/or corporatevolunteerism@heart.org.

Ask volunteers to notify you when they have completed the challenge and submit the estimated number of people impacted using the Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge Checklist to celebrate the number of people reached with the challenge!

STEP 6:

Thank your volunteers and colleagues who supported the Blood Pressure Challenge.

Sample thank you e-mail to volunteers:

Thank you for supporting **[insert COMPANY NAME]**'s Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge! With your help, our company raised awareness about uncontrolled high blood pressure with **X** number of people. YOU have made a big impact and educated community members about this "silent killer" which is a leading risk factor for cardiovascular disease!

Since **nearly half** of U.S. adults have high blood pressure and many don't even know they have it, this activity played an important role in supporting the American Heart Association's work to fight heart disease and stroke.

You are making a positive impact and we appreciate your participation!

Email questions to:
corporatevolunteerism@heart.org

TIP:

If your company offers "Dollars for Doers," be sure to encourage employees to log their volunteer hours!

To see if your company offers this benefit, visit www.heart.org/matchinggifts enter your company name and scroll to the bottom of the page!



BLOOD PRESSURE AWARENESS CHALLENGE VOLUNTEER CHECKLIST



Thank you for volunteering with the American Heart Association! Use this checklist to track your progress as you complete the Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge. Be sure to notify your company leader once you have completed the list of activities so the impact you make can be tracked and celebrated!

- Commit** 30 minutes to learning about blood pressure including: tips for self-monitoring, what the numbers mean and action people can take to control their blood pressure.
- Research** openly accessible locations where community members can get their blood pressure checked (pharmacies, grocery stores etc.) and create a list of at least five locations to share with others.

Location

1.

2.

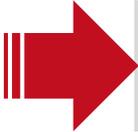
3.

4.

5.

- Be counted** as someone who knows their numbers and gets their own blood pressure checked. Use this [Blood Pressure Postcard Tracker](#) to track your readings! (This information will not be shared with anyone)

Has it been a while? Make an appointment to [see your doctor!](#)



Quick tip: Consider purchasing a clinically validated [blood pressure monitor](#) for you and your family to use!

- Challenge** at least 10 personal contacts (friends, family, coworkers, etc.) to “know their numbers” and track at least two BP readings over a two-week period.

**Ask them to notify you if they are going to participate, but please let your contacts know they should NOT share their actual BP numbers.*

Name of contacts taking the challenge

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.



- Share** the social media messages provided by the AHA over the two-week activation period.

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES



- Did you know that close to half of American adults have high blood pressure? Of those, about 75% don't have it controlled and many don't even know they have it. Visit [manageyourbp.org](https://www.heart.org/manager/your-blood-pressure) to learn more! **#CheckIt**

Spanish version: [Baja Tu Presión | American Heart Association](#)

- Now more than ever, it is important to pay attention to your blood pressure, know your numbers and work with a health care professional to control the levels and manage risks. [How To Monitor Your Blood Pressure at Home - YouTube](#) **#CheckIt**

A Spanish version of the video is [available here](#).

- For most people, a normal blood pressure should be 120/80 or less. Visit [manageyourbp.org](https://www.heart.org/manager/your-blood-pressure) to learn more! **#CheckIt**

Spanish version: [Baja Tu Presión | American Heart Association](#)

- [Get Down With Your Blood Pressure!](#) High blood pressure affects millions of us. Check it, talk to your doctor and follow your beat. Monitoring is power. **#CheckIt**

A Spanish version of the video is [available here](#).



Quick Tips for posting on Social Media:

- When posting to Instagram, include links in your bio, not the post. Be sure to follow and tag the American Heart Association on your social media channels. Find us **@American_heart** Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- Take selfies when getting your blood pressure checked correctly or participating in fun wellness activities at home or on site to include in your posts with the hashtag **#CheckIt!**
- Share social media messages with organizations across your personal channels (like your church, Employee Resource Group or other group you are involved with) and encourage them to share the posts to reach the largest and most diverse audience possible.



Date of social media post	# of likes

Track and submit number of people you reached through the challenge to your company leader.

Estimated # of People Reached: _____
(How many of your personal contacts got their blood pressure checked? How many "likes" did you get on your social media posts? Did any organizations your work with also share the information you shared with them about blood pressure?)

CONGRATULATIONS ON COMPLETING THE BLOOD PRESSURE AWARENESS CHALLENGE!



Thank you!



By dedicating time as a volunteer for to raise awareness about uncontrolled blood pressure, you are directly supporting the mission of the American Heart Association and making a positive impact on the health of our communities.

Thank you for making a difference!

