

Fitness and Blood Pressure



Fitness and Health

Being Fit is NOT the same as Being Healthy.

HEALTHY means being free of any infections or diseases.

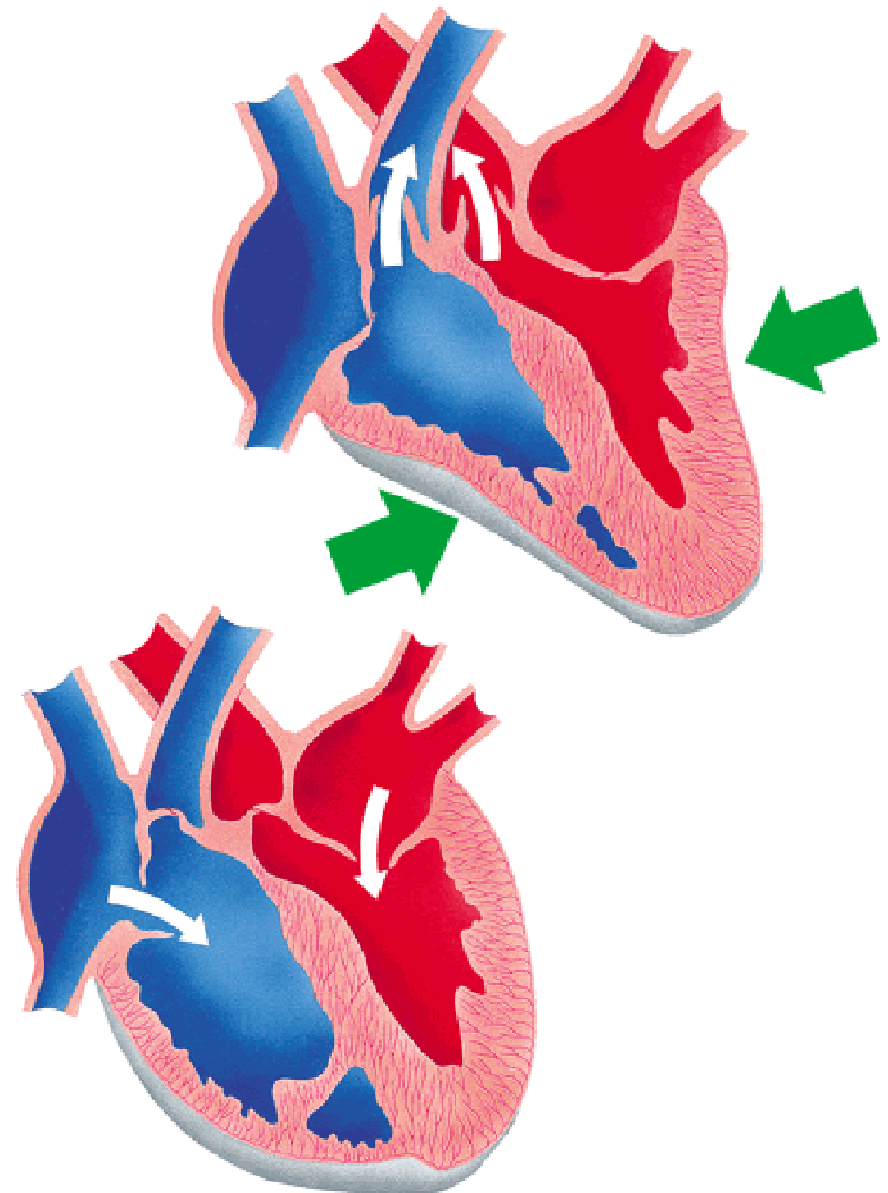
Being FIT is a measure of how well you can perform physical tasks.

An Olympic athlete with the flu is fit but not healthy.

Blood Under Pressure

Blood is pumped around the body by the **CONTRACTIONS** of the **HEART**.

These contractions **increase** the **pressure** of the blood. Blood needs to be pumped under pressure so it reaches all the parts of your body.



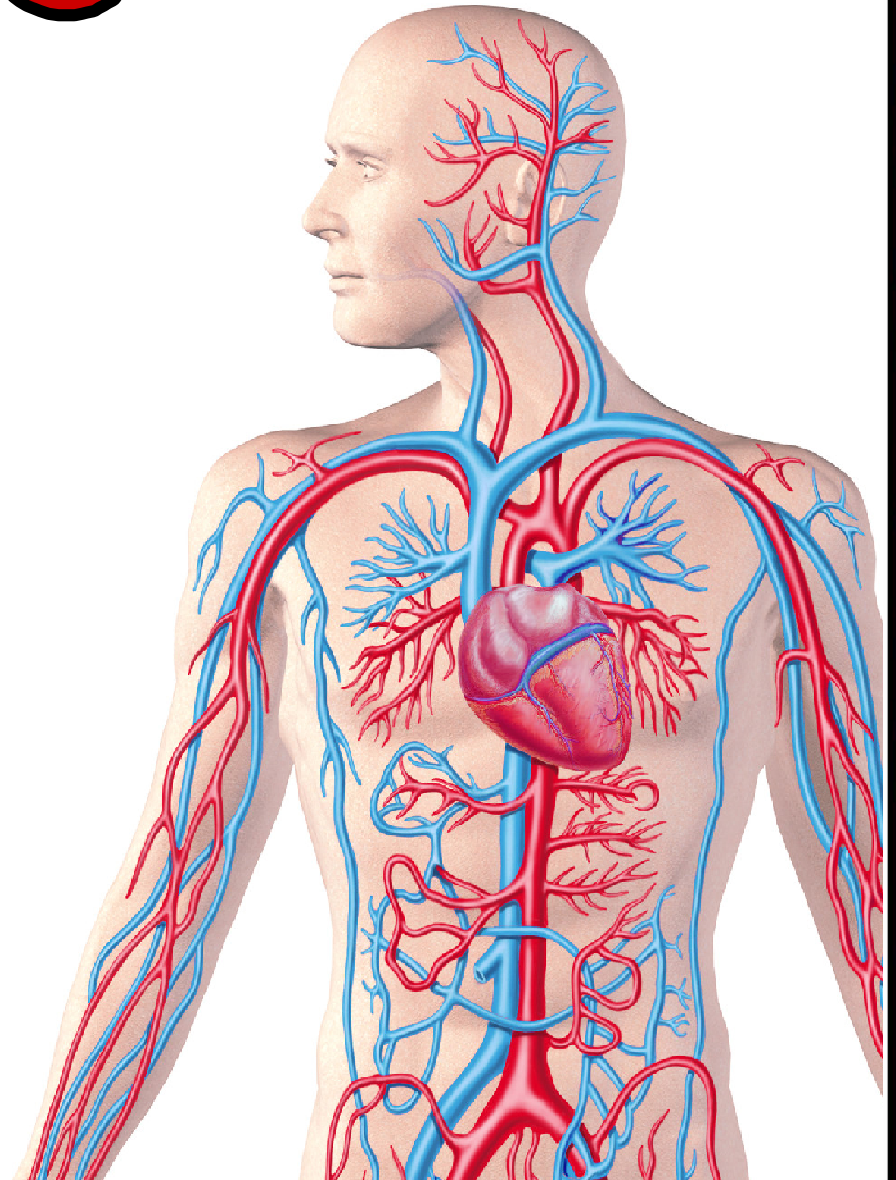
Circulating Blood

The blood leaves the heart through the **arteries**.

These split into thousands of tiny **capillaries**, which carry blood to every cell in the body.

The blood then flows through the **veins** back to the heart.

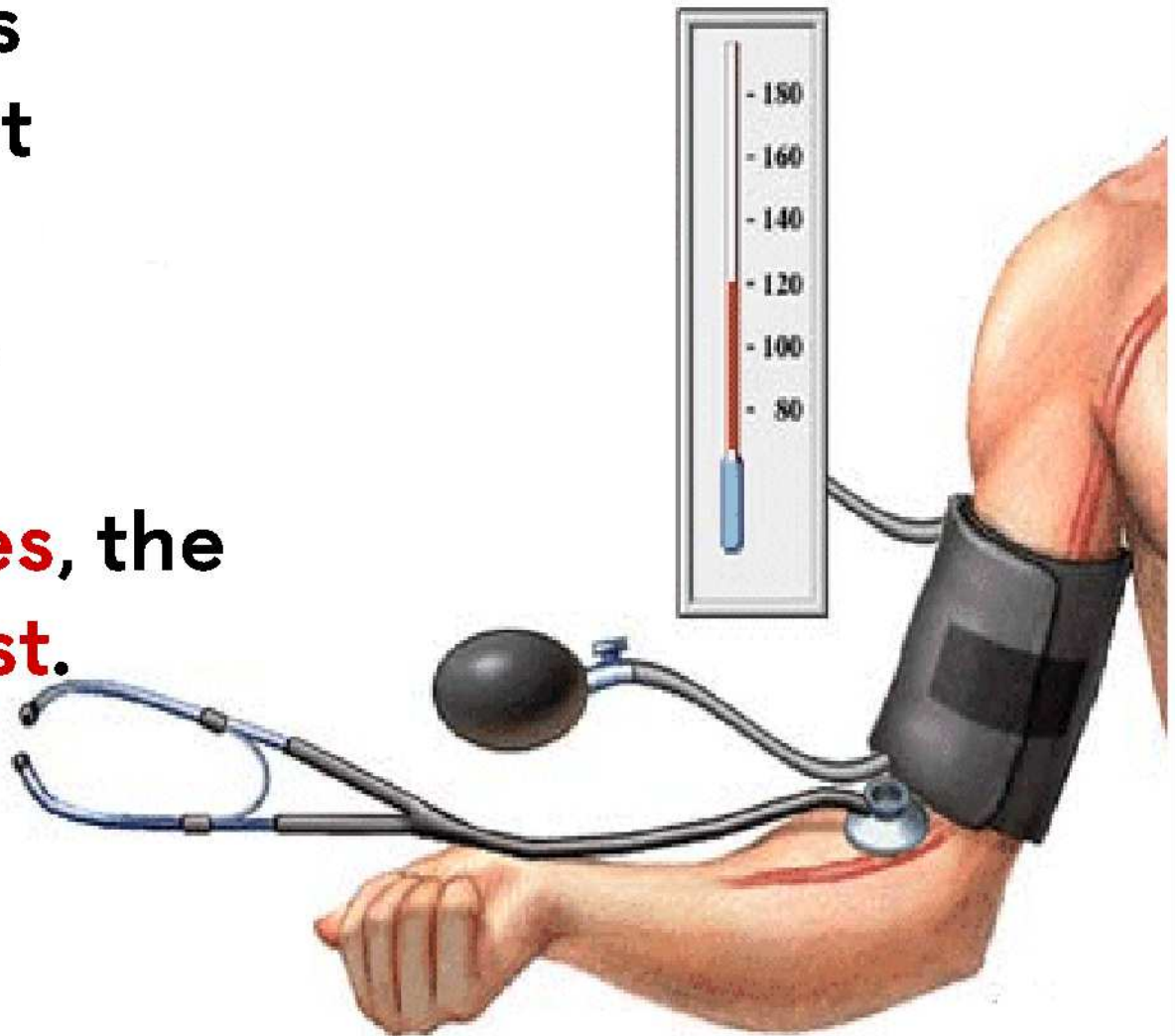
The **pressure** gets **lower** as the blood flows through the system.



Systolic and Diastolic Pressure

Blood pressure is at its **highest** when the heart **contracts**. This is the **SYSTOLIC PRESSURE**.

When the heart **relaxes**, the pressure is at its **lowest**. This is the **DIASTOLIC PRESSURE**.



Measuring Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is measured in mm of mercury (mmHg).

In a healthy person it shouldn't be higher than about 135 (systolic pressure) over about 85 (diastolic pressure).



Factors affecting Blood Pressure

As people get older their blood pressure tends to get higher. Other factors that can contribute to high blood pressure are:

- a diet with too much **salt** in it
- being **overweight**
- drinking too much **alcohol**
- being under lots of **stress** for a long time
- not doing enough **exercise**

